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ABSTRACT

Focusing on changes in the minds of the audience, this study of the impact of television programs provides a general analysis of the perceptual spectrum of the television audience and its values, preferences, and attachments to the content of television programs. Influences are identified and cued to the development of programming, and findings of research on primary information processing are discussed as they relate to the transmission of televised ideas and content. Various methods of content analysis, data regarding ideas, and ways to intercept ideas in the earliest stages of production or to measure idiomatic change are presented, as well as the major questions and problems of western society and the basic mental stereotypes and archetypes that are created in the minds of the television audience. Five approaches to improving programming for television in Quebec Province are suggested, and a 78-item bibliography is attached. (CHC)

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TELEVISION CONTENT

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TELEVISION CONTENT

Introduction

The impact of television programmes has changed rapidly in the past few years. The rigidly obeyed "prime time" is no longer encountered by audiences; favorite programmes no longer hold the same ratings over all regions. The cultural, tribal, social differences, together with changing technology, are fragmenting the television audience. More and more we encounter preferences for "certain" programmes, for "certain" actors, anchormen, and those preferences vary from city to city, regions or provinces.

The delivery of programmes has changed also. More cable channels, with converter possibilities, delivery of U.S. programmes, and increased amounts of satellite carried information, are entering the perceptual spectrum of our audience. The video-cassettes are making a slow but steady entry into educational institutions and private homes.

All those factors contribute to the development and change of audience "tastes" and preferences.

But these factors are merely "external" ones, already perceived and forecasted by the communication industry a few years ago. There are more subtle, invisible changes, occurring in the mind of the audience. The major change occurs on the fringe of "programming" practices and programme scheduling. It is the natural, but slow process of audience attachment to "certain" content of programmes, as the people already educated with a multitude of hours in front of television sets are more closely associating themselves with stories, actors or situations. This is a complicated psychodramatic and psychosociological process.

The "content" should not be understood in our information environment as a single story, a "special", or an individual television program. It is usually a "pattern" of content, stereotyped with similar characters and situations. We could talk more about the "genre" characteristics, but not having the form of the television execution in mind, but rather the semantic parts of information.

The second major change occurs within the temporal axis of television programmes. The classical thirty minute - one hour format is no longer held in the mind of the audience. People begin to perceive smaller information patterns (modules), ranging from a few minutes to the extent of 7 - 10 - 12 minutes of length, more easily. This created an unusual rise in ratings for sitcoms and news. The reasons for such a change lie within the informational environment and psychophysiological development or deterioration of certain functions of the human brain cortex.

The third major change has occurred in the past few years in connection with the human information channel capacity. Ten years ago, say, the visual input from television programmes was absolutely a leading one, if not the master information carrier. The subtle generation and genetic changes in audience has produced, in past years, an increase of information delivery in sound input channel, leaving the visual delivery channel still in a leading position. But in certain cases (stress wave delivery patterns), the tastes and preferences of an audience can be led by the impact of the sound channel.

This change occurs, not only in the sound spectrum level (intonation of voice or harmony of music), but also on the intensity level (due to the impact of electronic, rock music).

There are a few other areas in which changes in audience tastes are visible, but these processes are either very slow, or insignificant. I am referring to the structural, semantic or socio-demographic components, which may locally raise or lower the preferences of audiences.

Also, there is an indirect effect of socio-economic lifestyles and conditions, reflected in the audience's preferences.

In summary, these changes develop in current time, a highly fragmented television audience, with fragments as small as 1,000 - 5,000 TV sets units, and with the largest groups not exceeding 200,000 - 400,000 TV sets units.

Such a situation begins to be very difficult for every television network executive or person charged with the programming decision, or with the development of a regional (local) broadcasting profile.

In the following chapters the perceptual spectrum of the television audience, its values, preferences, attachments to the content of television programmes are analyzed in general, and the influences cued to the development of TV programmes, with some suggestions to the ideas interceptions, assessments, followed by brief summaries for possible creation of more impactive "better" television for present audiences.

I. CHANGES IN TV AUDIENCE PERCEPTUAL SPECTRUM

For a long time, the majority of North American researchers were interested with the quantitative aspects of television viewing. Rating companies and market research institutes brought this research to a high level of sophistication and use by television networks. But in recent years, rating results which have not yielded the strong forecasts for audience tastes or groupings have appeared.

Several researchers (Arundale, Kellner, Krippendorf, Wimmer) have suggested different approaches to the extraction of data of contents from the audiences, but so far, very little has been done on larger than local scales of study or sondages.

The aspect of information perception and processing from the television programmes other than verbal, numerical or graphic recall, has been almost totally neglected. Biometric studies in this respect are rare, and only a few (largest) networks use more sophisticated content analysis methods, like preview houses (ASI, Los Angeles), or in-house content analysis systems (NBC).

Therefore, the concept of "audience perceptual spectrum" is nearly unknown to practitioners in television networks beyond the departments of audience research.

There are several aspects preceeding any thinking about the "television audience perceptual spectrum":

1. The question of "average viewer":

From a semantic point of view, such a category does not exist in any connection to television programmes. Every person has a different reason for viewing a television program. These reasons may or may not be pronounced, and may or may not cause any detectable changes in human behavior. Therefore, grouping the viewers according to viewing television programmes without an appropriate additional data base have highly unstable grounds. "Appropriate data" is understood as not only the obvious demographical, socio-economical or employment variables, but the very important psychological, neurophysiological and socio-psychological data about the viewers. Such backgrounds appear only rarely in any existing market research services, and are totally absent in rating results. Several researchers in broadcasting (Wakshlag, Mettalinos, Fletcher) have tried in the past to bring such data to the attention of broadcasters, but failed due to the data distances from network praxis, or large time delays between extracted data and viewed programmes.

2. The question of sequential discrepancies:

Most of the rating surveys register the overall "binary viewing responses" (viewed-non viewed programmes). Only exceptionally do surveys follow the viewer's behaviour during the viewing of a television programme. It may easily happen that the TV set is on in the family room, but part of the time the focus of attention is turned away from programmes, or even if the programme is viewed continually, the attention level varies. Some studies in this field (Levy, Olkes, DuBose, Tankard) indicate that information processing from the same television programme may vary as much as an 80% degree of content retention in the same viewing group of people. In recent years, these discrepancies seem not to diminish, but to increase.

3. The question of "primary" and "cumulative" programme impact:

Most of the surveys and studies do not take into account the preceeding stage of knowledge or stresses under which the viewer perceives the programme. The questionnaires or interviews mostly register the "cumulative" programme impact, that is, all viewer's previous experiences, education and attitudes together with the primary impact of the programme.

Even the most sophisticated battery of questions can not eliminate the sub-processing of memory information from the brain cortex.

Therefore the pure, primary impact of television programmes is clouded and biased by existing, memorized experiences.

There is very little research done on post-viewing periods, if we do not understand this period only as delay between the programme viewing and mechanism of survey. I am referring to the mental and physical events, succeeding the programme viewing, which until a certain time (several minutes to several hours) interact into the long-term memory of the viewer with the TV programme.

When we carefully examine the television audience in view of past dilemnas, certain similarities appear as general trends in common television viewing practices among people:

A. Fragmentation of audiences:

Here, I am referring not primarily to the quantitative aspects reflected in rating surveys, but more to the semantic differences during programme viewing.

Most of the sociometric data do not give any cues to this process. We are no longer dealing with groups of "farmers", "rural or urban" audiences, "housewives", "teenagers", etc.

The fragmentation of audiences in a semantic view refers more to the psychological characteristics of an audience. The clearest expression of these variables refer to the scales or hierarchies of values, which bring quite large differences (of age, sex, occupation) of people together watching the same television programmes.

But such characteristics do not appear in single, isolated expressions (as such "value of truth", "value of religion"). There is a whole hierarchy of values, which determines the decision to see or not to see the TV programme; a hierarchy which has memorical and sequential differences.

Another characteristic which plays a role in the viewing preferences in recent times, are socio-economic variables. These are not simply data about the family or viewer incomes, but more the projections of socio-economic expectations (desire to be or not to be rich, influential, etc). There is a substantial change from the simple, straight understanding of wealth as social status denominator.

Finally, there are very fluid changes within the audience attitudes, so that the basic statisical data have only very limited validity.

All these aspects create a need for new maps of our clientele, whereby the "strong" or "weak" viewing area may not correspond with the density of inhabitants or coverage of area by different TV signals.

If we plot together such data over a span of time or region, then an "audience perceptual spectrum" appears. Apart from the straight "televison programme viewing", there are certain aspects of small group interactions, dominant and sub-dominant leaders and the aspects of preceeding and following verbal interactions (gossip), which appear to be more important in current times than in the past. These are indirect reasons for further audience fragmentation.

There were many predictions of a technological nature, like cable television viewing, influences of over-the-border programmes, converters, etc. Most studies show that the predicted quantitative fragmentation did not occur, or had only a marginal effect. But, in fact, no such study investigated the impact of television programme content on the fragmentation of audiences. The rich choice of channels had one, but seldom mentioned the impact of "sequential viewing", or channel flipping - not only due to curiosity of the viewer, but also as a certain result of programme content structures (relief from monotonous or slow paced programmes).

B. Orientation toward the content of programmes:

There are several reasons for the present television orientation of audiences more toward the content of programmes, than the orientation to the scheduling ("prime-Time" concept).

1. Segmentation of the activities:

During the past two decades the concept of a strict working time (nine-to-five) or exclusive working activities is gradually diminishing. More people are able to enjoy leisure activities in hours when only organized work was possible in the past. Certain occupations permit TV viewing during working time. It is not unusual to see an operating TV set in salesmen offices, in boutiques, department stores, watchmen's cabins, or offices. More people are working on extended shifts. According to statistical records such a diversification of activities influences approximately 35% of the inhabitants, while during the 50's, the working force with a certain level of diversification of attention was below 6%. TV programmes retain more attention if its content is closer to the attitudes of the viewer,rather than being rigidly scheduled on certain hours. For example, sport programmes are known to have high distraction power from working activities.

2. Saturation of information enviroment:

The amount and structure of incoming information available to all citizens has increased rapidly during the past two decades. Only a very inaccurate estimate suggests that, in Canada, the information environment in leading cities has increased twelve times in the past fifteen years. The number of channels, number of programming hours available on TV sets has increased four times in thepast ten years. Realistically, it is impossible to watch the majority of television programmes delivered on the screen - so selection becomes inevitable. In the early years of multi-channel programming, there were attempts to orient certain TV stations toward specific genres or origins of progremmes. Then the leading shows, or stars of the shows, became determinators of selection. The current situation shows increased purchases of TV guides or programme schedules appearing in newspapers. People very often switch from a favorite show, if the content becomes weak or differs from the immediate mood or attitude of the viewer.

3. Sociopsychologic factors:

Two decades ago the television set was still detached from the mind of the viewer. Today the television program is a natural part of every citizen's information environment. This situation not only creates the informatation delivery impact, but the interactive results as well. Many viewers use television programmes for therapeutic reasons, to relieve tensions, to stimulate themselves, to rest from different physical or mental activities, to evoke memories. Television programmes are used as a core for dreams, imagination, mental role playing situations. In many families, television programmes are used in group interaction, or serve as a barrier to unwanted exchanges of opinions, quarrels.

4. Individualization of viewing:

Paradoxically, the viewing of television programmes is becoming more and more a lonely affair. In the current mass society, individuals are often deprived of their own specific behavior or expression. As a result, the person turns inward, to the inner world of his/her mind. Television programmes are very suited to the psychodramatic role playing tool. But this demands a certain association of attitudes or ideas of the programmes with the state of the mind of the viewer. Therefore, the content of programmes has primer importance. This may not be only a specific story, idea, but a whole range of ideas or contents suited to the minute attitude of the viewer.

In summary, we should perceive the orientation of the viewer toward the content of the programme not as a single viewer to a single story, idea of the programme, but as an individual viewer toward the group, pattern of similar ideas, contents.

C. Perception of small information patterns:

I am referring here to the temporal characteristics of content, stories. With the saturation of the information environment, selection readily and often made, an attachment to the large structure (novel, drama, feature film) becomes difficult. I must point out, that a simple reference to the length of a film or a television programme has little meaning, compared to the syntactic and semantic structure of the programme. Here are the most important semiotic modules (as understood in the Lieber-Paulson sense as a piece of the programme, which has distinct and separate cognitive values), their number, succession and nature of bridging between them. The more modules are within the given time of the programme, the more easily the viewer becomes attached to the programme. Classic examples are sitcoms, where the average situation module lasts at the most four-five minutes. The concept of modules are clearly understood by scriptwriters and producers of programmes, but may not be consciously perceived by the audience. Another example is television news, with classical structure of several spots, news items, each of short duration, but with extreme variation of topics. There is a very different impact of modules with fictional and factual content. The fictional modules require a high volume of stereotypes and archetypes (same actors, same sets, same predicted reactions). On the other hand, even a small volume of stereotypes (in TV news) has a rapidly diminishing impact on the programme. The reason for such an impact difference is in the diametrally different content perception by the viewer. In the fictional module the semantic impact is completely within the viewer, the program itself serves as a delivering agent. In the factual module (news), the semantic impact is unknown to the viewer, completely within the television program. (Therefore, anchormen of the news become part of the TV news including the smallest facial expression, set or inserts).

There are differences in the perceptual rhythm of the viewer of those two sorts of modules. In the presentation of fictional modules (sitcoms), the perception stamina rests with the immediate state of the mind of the viewer. In the presentation of the factual module (News), the perceptual rhythm of the viewer is highly subordinated by the presentation pace of the programme and may lead eventually to perceptual exhaustion of the viewer. In this sense, the majority of viewers do not interrupt viewing for TV news; the viewing of modules requires high skill of scriptwriters or program developers to retain the attention of viewers continuously with the program for sitcoms.

Another semantic aspect comes into consideration: a short time of presentation requires that the information be condensed into a very tight package, with three consequences for production programming:

(a) the pace of information delivery must increase (reference to "American fast TV programmes");

(b) the emphasis is switched from dialogues to non-verbal cues;

(c) the supporting environment of scenes must be stereotyped (either within the programme or within the natural environment of the viewer).

There is also a remote psychophysiological aspect pertinent to the perception of small information patterns. The rich informational environment has a profound impact on the intrinsic value of each incoming information. After a certain time (one or two generations within the group, nation - or only a few years of time in acculturation process), people start to disregard the common value of information generally, and the semantic component (ideas, content pertinent to past culture, group, environment) wins the choice of full processing and memory storages. Other information is skimmed off within the short-term memory. This process happens naturally within every film or television programme with shots or situations which serve only for the building up of concepts, ideas,and then are forgotten immediately to clear the way for further short-term memory processing.

D. Emphasis on sound portion of television programmes:

When television was a new medium in the life of people, the main attraction was a screen. The sound portion of programmes was perceived as a reminder of radio, explanator and synchronizer of pictures. This kind of perceptual residua lasted a very long time, almost to the present time. It takes a few decades for people to begin to be educated by the natural process of experience (watching countless hours of films and television programmes) to the fast delivery of pictures, skimming and dislodging parts of the redundant information even before they disappear from the screen. Such skills only exist, in a high level, now in a few nations of the world - the U.S.A., Canada and a few European countries being among those with the "fastest" perceptual speed for film and television viewing. It usually takes more than one generation (of movie-goers, television viewers) to adapt eyes and ears to the non-biological flow of information.

Supportive environment (city life, riding cars, trains, planes) also play a role.

With such a process in high stage or nearly completed, a startling change appears: human perceptual organs begin to increase the capacity for information input, and when one channel of information achieves the full information detection from its source, another information channel starts to reach for a higher capacity. In our case, when the eye deals comfortably with a fast paced television picture, there begins to be a larger space in the cortex for the processing of sound information.

In external behaviour, people (usually coming generations) tend to retrieve more information with the newly enhanced channel.

There are two major effects on the perceptual spectrum of the television audience:

1. The sound portion of the television programme is perceived more and processed more (which allows the artist, in feedback, to put more emphasis, ideas or contents into the sound, but not necessarily into the speech, dialogue).
2. The learned mechanism of picture viewing has a certain impact on the listening of sound (sound pattern perceiving, with equal importance placed on the sound spectrum, and the sound intensity).

But there is a significant difference in the semantic impact of the sound: Whereas in the picture, the idea or content can be delivered as a full pattern simultaneously, in the sound, we will always need a certain time until the sound is recognized as a concept, idea, content.

In codified sound (speech), we know that roughly one or two sentences are necessary for structuring and delivering an idea, which represents a time of ten-twenty seconds, unless we use several previous time segments for idea build-up.

In uncodified sound (noise, natural sound background), we usually only support the visual idea, but within this context, the sound portion of information could be a trigger to the stress wave mechanism (emotional response of viewer).

A specific situation arises with music, especially song. Here, the sound information is completely suited to deliver an idea (content independently) and in many cases, with remarkable speed. Song or music very often uses psychophysiological short-cuts, where emotional build-up serves not only as the envelope of the content, but as the content itself. Therefore, the role of the information channels are reversed: the visual channel serves the information delivery tool. Television specifics (camera movements, close-ups of singer) may, if sparsely used, enhance or speed up the idea delivery,

A different sitution occurs if we use music or song to different visual contents. In this case, the sound part of the program diminishes the delivery role to the emotional trigger. Within the larger contects of the whole mass of television viewers, if such situations happen often, and also in the supportive environment (rock concerts, discos), the feedback of the situation on the perception of television programmes is one of expectancy increase. Sound is no longer treated in a subordinated way as in the previous, older generation, but as an equal partner in the information delivery.

These are the major changes in the perceptual spectrum of the television audience. There are many minor specifics, which show an increasing semantic fragmentation of programmes or channel preferences. The increasing emphasis on regional broadcasting, creation of new cable heads and proliferation of channels are only remote signs of this process.

II. TRANSMISSION OF TELEVISED IDEAS AND CONTENT

A small recollection of the basic mechanism of idea interceptions, processing and storage should be made in order to apply the latest discoveries from the area of biocybernetics on the structures, hierarchies, codes and patterns of ideas and content carried via television programmes to the viewer. I am referring, here, to the basic works of V. Breitenberg, S. Malcolm, A. Laufberger, K. Pribram, I. Bentov, V. Yarbus and O. Yagi.

Ten years ago the most startling discovery in brain research was the notion of neural circuit and the digital nature of primary information processing. At the end of the seventies, the same revolution occurred in the discovery of neural temporal pathway as the closest comparison or resemblance with the word "concept", "idea", "thought".

A. Idea perception and processing in the brain:

What actually happens in the brain when we begin to talk about "idea" or "thought" formation?

We know that incoming information from the outer world reaches the cerebral cortex, where this kind of excitation can be recorded with average fixations. From there, parts of the brain's cortex start to work with various degrees of activity, always at different levels of activity from the neuron circuits, fast firing and fast ceasing in their active work. Through conventional means of recording (electrophysiological EEG recording), we can gain a very little insight as to what is going on in the brain beyond the general expression of the period known as "information processing". After a short time the electrical activities (or their detection by EEG) cease. Sometimes we can detect certain EEG patterns, which may lead to memory storage, but "memorizing" of certain facts, experiences, is not fully detectable.

Only in the past few years with the development of spectral analysis of changes occurring in certain parts of the brain's cortex (methodology which is referred to as chematospectrography of the brain cortex), were we able to plot the plot of the chemical changes pertinent to memory.

But it is not the change itself which we can associate with the term "thought", "idea", but the process of the change, more specifically the repetition of such a process. The repetition should not be understood as repeating the same firings of the same neuron circuits, but the excitation of similar circuits or circuits belonging to the similar chemical receptors. The lowering of thresholds of these entities enables the further incoming information to pass more rapidly, and more or less in the same way. The picture of such a process is labelled as "neural pathway", and because this pathway is so far not a stable feature, it is changing, we refer to the "temporal neural pathway".

Still this notion does not contain the full meaning of the word "thought" or "idea". There are other mechanisms determining extent, rise, fixation and decay of such a pathway. We call it a "border translator". It determines the edges of a neural pathway. Here, the differences in the thresholds of sensitivity of the neuron circuits vary greatly. The differential potential of these borders allow faster transmission of incoming signals, which in turn, create faster acceptance and passage of the signal or faster rejection of the signal. In popular terms, these borders originate from "identification", "differentiation" - and in more complicated structural terms, when combinatory thinking (areas of parental lobe) is involved, the origin of "logic".

The border mechanism has its feedback to the original pathway. This may be a very numerous, repetitive process, which we in popular terms, refer to as "clearing, accepting or rejecting" - of thoughts, ideas.

Still, between the "thought" and "idea" there is a difference, merely of the borderline fixations. In some cases, these borders of pathways become very stiff, creating a more permanent feature that the pathway itself. In such cases, the further retrievals may excite the borders only, allowing an unusually fast passage of signals without any activity inside the pathway. Most such cases find the linguistic codification as idea.

The "idea" can be of a very different nature: it can be a simple cumulation of similar experiences, memories or perceptions; it can be a fixed combination of those; it can be a repeated and fixed process of information patterns; it can be a combination of stress wave mechanism and specific firings (we are talking of "idea feeling" in this case).

There are no inborn ideas in the human brain. But a child may be born with a certain inclination to numbers of temporal neural pathways, and it is very possible in a supportive environment, that such "ideas" are quickly learned and anticipated. If the supportive environment reaches and catches most such cases, a child may grow to the level of unusual intelligence or genius type.

In prehistoric times, it was far from easy for the human mind to create, fix and maintain the "ideas", temporal neural pathways. The environment was far from supportive of the creation of concepts or abstracts. Usually the lifespan of prehistoric people was too short to accumulate a large number of temporal neural pathways so the brain may learn to create such features with ease and comfort.

The development of articulate speech as storage for information (oral tradition), but mostly the development of more permanent storage via writing, pictorgraphs and physical records (architectural features), is responsible for the unusual flowering of brain activity, which we now commonly call "thinking". Still, it was necessary to pass through many trials in many civilizations, before the thinking feature of the brain was governed, not only as an accidential process (trance, insight), but as a disciplined, regular part of man's activities. Greek and Roman civilizations brought a treasury of junction between the thinking and codification of it in the most simple, time-saving modes. So, the rhetoric and logic we now use for idea creation, fixation and retrieval date back to those civilizations.

It should be noted, that I am referring to rhetoric merely as an expression tool of ideas, to logic as a structuring tool for temporal neural pathways and literature as a fixation tool for recording and storing ideas.

Those three tools had a profound impact on the mental development of man. The lifespan of Western man was mentally duplicated and multiplied by past ideas stored in written records and retrieved easily on demand. The original ideas were enriched and brought forward in a multitude of variants. Altogether they are now a core part of our Western culture.

There are genuine differences in the creation of "ideas" in the brain in different basic cultures. For example, in most Oriental cultures (of Chinese, Japanese, Indian origin), the temporal neural pathway can be easily created by inner stimulators, learnd or inborn to the inhabitants of certain regions. Such a fact was very early intercepted by the culture, and some rituals, religious or philosophical schools carefully nurtured this mechanism. A contemporary description of the induction mechanism of a temporal neural pathway may be called meditation, insight, enlightenment.

There is a grain of truth in the reports regarding the "enlightened men" - priests, prophets, generally. In certain cases, through the use of powerful inner stimulators (occasionally also drugs, dietary or biophysical restraints), the majority of brain functions may be, more or less permanently, switched off from normal positions, and, accidentally, be beneficial to the individual. (Reports regarding this state of mind refer to the possibility of perceiving all realities in different lights of mind, to find peace of mind, to find other worlds ..."). Usually such a state of mind is accompanied by the omission of regular life-time activities, or negligencies, toward pain, torture or self-humiliation.

Generally, in Western culture, such states of mind are very rare, but they are greatly exaggerated and carried on by reporting via writings over many generations (Bible stories, saints in religions, prophecies).

When cultures meet (directly or via television programmes), such a sharing of "ideas" is done with a great uneasiness and difficulty. I may point to the history of Canada, where most of the ideas and concepts of original cultures (Indians and Eskimos) were not understood or were misinterpreted by white settlers. I am not referring to the actual events or material squirmishes between the cultures, but to the basic concepts of life, universe, religions, morals - the basic ideas with which the white men came to this continent. A similar situation exists in more subtle terms, when the English culture met the ideas of the French or other Western European origins.

In past centuries, such a cross-cultural "idea sharing" were performed over a period of time, allowing a certain degree of feedback between the spokesmen of the cultures. When we talk about the televised ideas, these entities reach certain cultural entitities of an audience in a matter of seconds, without any possibility of feedback. This may have the invisible, but tragic, consequence for inhabitants of certain regional or cultural groups.

It should be distinguished by the degree of cross-cultural impact in situations of saturated or non-saturated informational environment. In the case of saturated information environment, the impact or cultural chock is levelled off by the degree of information choice or informational attitude of the viewers. In the case of non-saturated informational environment (telecasting prgorammes from rich Montreal information environment to a rural distant region of James Bay), the ideas will be perceived with an initial informational hunger, with a high degree of fixation and attachment even to the most biased content. Such individuals have no defensive mechanism in-built against the (even primitive) persuasive tactics.

There is another aspect of cross-cultural transmission of ideas: the pacing of ideas, repeating or cross-cutting (all mechanism very obvious in any television programme). The impact of such a combination in saturated informational environment induces the idea skimming, without substantial fixation in long-term memory of the viewer. In the non-saturated informational environment the same mechanism produce a high degree of confusion, and if such a situation persists, the suspicion to any ideas delivery follows.

B. Ideas and content structures and hierarchies:

It is inevitable that every idea, even a simple one, consists of smaller parts. These parts are basically of two different natures:

1. Parts of the temporal neural pathways, intercepted or interpreting factual information from the environment (realities).
2. Parts of the temporal neural pathways, serving as mechanism of the pathway, preferential, crossing or inhibiting agents in neuron circuitry.

Factual information parts from the environment, which are primary to the pathways, are what we call "content" (of television programmes). Mechanistic parts of information of pathways are what we usually call syntax, structure, grammar (in linguistics).

Beside these two groups, there are many other information parts intercepted or processed by the brain which do not adhere to the specific ideas, pathways. On one side, we may call these simply noise or redundant information but, which in longer terms, may become functional in the idea creation, or may inhibit such a process (moral or cultural barriers).

The more the brain contains noise or redundant information parts, the more we label such situations as "unstable minds", or the more such a person is succeptible to psychotic persuasion (the usual rise of many diversive religious sects in the U.S.A. is partly reflective of such a process, or the increase of the number of persons with high brain deformation patterns). To explain such a change in the thinking of a person, we must understand the function of noise or redundant information on the brain. It is not simply unused or unnecessary information. Every minute of life, the brain stores informational parts of the environment, which may never be used by such a person. But when neuronal circuit is activated, the residua of activity is memorized (not necessarily to the exact reflection of the real event) and, therefore, the sensitivity threshold of the circuit is occupied. It can be released, but only by a similar information input, or by a stress wave (emotion). When a number of such occupied circuits is high in the brain of a person, he/she starts to find a mechanism for release (in religion, alcohol, drugs, sexual relationships), or released it by self-mechanism (induction, meditation, trances). There are members of societies (charismatic leaders, shamans, medicinemen) who are able to trigger such a release for large groups of inhabitants.

Somehow both different groups of parts create the picture of temporal neural pathways.

The factual parts of the information (or carriers of the content of the idea) create the volume of neural pathway. The more factual events, items, bits the idea contains, the "thicker" the neural pathway is. This characteristic volume has several impacts on the content of the idea. At first, the more volume there is, the "thicker" the pathway is, and the more "cloudy, unclear" the idea appears and it is more difficult to articulate it in speech or in description. Secondly, with the increase of volume, the variety of retrieval modes is increased. So the idea intercepted and stored may be retrieved, interpreted slightly differently or with biases. Thirdly, the temporal neural pathway may influence parts of the brain which have no role in such a process, and therefore, a new pathway can be triggered. (One thought gives birth to another idea), or stress waves are very often triggered (emotions associated with the idea retrievals), or basic metabolic processes can be influenced (blushing by thinking of "forbidden" ideas).

The mechanic parts of information (syntactic, logic, grammatic parts or mechanisms of neural pathway) direct the pathway in the cortex and create the outline of the pathway (borderline parts). In a certain way, the idea is "logically" processed only if the influence enriches the area of parental lobes. Otherwise, the illogical or emotional processing and formation take place (thinking by reason or thinking by heart). Generally, many "ideas" are processed not in the parental lobe, and in these cases, we recall the "ideas felt", rather than "ideas thought". There is also the uninhibited release of neural pathways during dreams, but such occasions, the pathways are accidently and partially released with connection to the metabolic processes going on during sleep. Therefore, any "logical" or "realistic" resemblances to dreams have no importance. (Freudian and Jungian therapy with the use of dreams uses the memory residua of dreams for psychofeedback during the treatment of patients).

The nature of "borderline parts" is the "outer envelope of an idea", and somehow influences the surrounding neural pathway. This surrounding may yield either resonance or resistance. In both cases, the attitude of the person toward the idea is influenced. In the case of high resonance, the neural pathway surrounding the person is "inclined", "like" the idea and is willing to direct the future behaviour within the range of the idea. In the case of resistance, certain uneasiness, fear or rejection of the idea follows. Sometimes these borderline mechanism may completely destroy the neural pathway (idea), and sometimes they are origins of enhancement or solid long-term memory storage.

By the nature of the brain's function (fluent processing of information during the person's life),the ideas are not stored in the brain in isolation, or in certain places of the cortex (like Plato and Democritos originally outlined). The temporal neural pathway may travel slighly in the cortex over a period of time, may enlarge, diminish or join another pathway. In its function, the brain cortex is forever changing, partially due to the exhaustion or death of many cells.

With new incoming information into the human brain, several or many neural pathways are prepared to carry the new energy input. What, if, and how far the incoming energy quantum is carried, depends not only on initial sensoric processing or catalythic impact of the brain, but also on the intersection or combination of possible pathways to carry the incoming information further. The external reflext of such processes suggest to us that ideas are reactivated related to content, and related to mechanics of processing.

In both cases, we see ideas and content appearing in groups, with structures inside it. The group notion probably has its origin in the content parts of ideas, and the structual notion lies with the borderline parts of ideas. Another possible origin is directed toward the temporal nature of the content (events and memoris follow each other), where borderline parts may act simultaneously, immediately. In both cases, the projection in the cortex of the brain may interact not only directly, but indirectly, by way of interference patterns. Such interference patterns may explain a certain transmission of ideas via ESP, psychic events or simple coincidences in a person's own thinking (casual coincidences).

In the area of borderline features, there is also a temporal and spatial effect. In both cases, the syntactic, grammatic nature of idea parts with its effect on the surrounding neural pathway are responsible for creating preferences, leading to the more or less permanently established hierarchy of ideas. There could also be similar effects perceived within the factual information parts, and then we speak of the hierarchy of content.

After explaining the general mechanism of ideas and content in the human brain, what are the specific processes due to the perception of television programmes?

1. Quantitative specific:

The viewer can comfortably digest a large number of ideas in an enormously short term via television programmes. Never in the history of mankind has a mental tool been invented with such high information transmission capabilities. There is a certain comfort in the living-room, easy and pleasant viewing distance and conditions, a high degree of brightness and contrast between the picture and high quality of intelligibility of sound. But there are other positive conditions of television programme viewing: the distraction from motor or other physical activities, leading to the concentration of mental processes. With sophisticated visual and audio literacy, there is increased possibility to interact with the ideas from programmes with one's own mental world, memories, attitudes.
The quantitative specific has also negative effects in the fast and common occurence of fatigue. But the television viewer solves such discomfort simply by falling asleep before the television set, or jumping up for a drink, or conversation to refresh the eyes and brain.

2. Mental distance matter:

The television viewer knows that all programme ideas happen in the "world away from me", in the virtual, mental distance. Therefore, all tragedies or realities of the television theatre, all stories can be put in a desirable mental distance within the fragment of seconds on demand by the viewer. This is the basic requirement of any theatrical performance.
But this distance has another, negative technological element: in the same way as in film, it cannot be dismissed. The television viewer cannot share

the excitement of other members of the audience; he can not, even remotely, support or influence the actor by direct personal response. The substituted way of "studio audience" fullfills only part of this deficiency: the group-social aspect of the audience. The television viewer can observe the reactions of others and can guess his own attitude in relationship to others (in this respect, the selection of the studio audience types and demographic samples has primary importance). Performances of comedies or humor on the television screen have a very different impact. These programmes are primarily stimulators, triggers, for basic, subcortical emotional responses (laughter), and, here, the basic mental distance does not play a major role. Of course, the "canned laughter" has much less impact, but it serves its purpose (additional triggers, stimulators).

3. Substitution matter:

The television viewer knows consciously or subconsciously that all ideas and content are, by their nature, substituted experience. Somebody else, invisible (cameraman,director, scriptwriter or switcher) has arranged the pieces of information into the flow of patterns, ideas, content. There is no way to stop, to turn the programme back. So the television viewer begins (and quickly learns) to flow with the programme. Individuality of time and space exploration is omitted, subdued and dismissed. At first, this process may be a painful one (perception of television programmes by Eskimos or Native peoples), but after a few generations, the viewer may even feel a certain degree of joy from the fluent delivery of ideas and expect to enjoy the rhythm of ideas' flow (enjoyment from past paced detective story on the screen). There is another, secondary aspect of the substituted experience, pertinent to the broader character of informational environment of the television viewer. If most of the experiences during the life of a person begin to be substituted (by film, radio, book, television), such a person may feel an urge to experience at least "some" ideas or content directly (hence, the increase of travelling or taking holidays in different countries, different modes with a hunger for the "real" experiences of Europe, the jungle, white water, climbing, crusing, etc. - referring mostly not the physical, but mental joys derived from such activities of leisure.

There is one specific mechanism in the interception of ideas by the television viewer: the entrance mechanism. I am referring to the initial time period of the television programme, where the viewer is still not sure of his/her decision to watch the programme, or decides a few hours before watching the program on the "possible ideas or content". It is a motivational process, where not only emotional characteristics, but certain semantic aspects play a role. The "content" matter of ideas is usually solved by programme advertisement or teasers. The syntactic matter is usually solved by the first few minutes (the first episode of a sitcom). In the larger context of many television programmes, the television viewer has an overall view (not always a clear one) regarding what he/she can expect from this or that channel, programme, show. The degree of expectancy is the code of viewing decisions. Many rating companies were correct in reaching for questions regarding preferences in programmes, shows. The reason for watching (why you watch this or that show, this or that actor, star) was very rarely questioned, and the inner impact of ideas delivered within the modules, gags, dialogues was nearly never questioned. Still, within this range,the most powerful impact of television ideas and content is hidden.

Somehow in the past, television authors and networks felt the uneasy and ethically problematic question of the delivery of different ideas and content on the screen. They invented a remarkably working and easy tool: the television stereotype and archetype.

Within daily programming structure, it was very easy to introduce a "serial" format, where the surrounding environment of ideas and content remain the same (set, family, actors, place), and only the situations are varied. Situation plays, situation comedies, situation detective stories, are currently saving the networks from the highly fragmented audience.

But how does the concept of "serial" influence the concept of ideas and content in the human brain?

In a single television programme ("special"), the viewer perceives the incoming information very similarly to film, one after another, and under the rule of the author, the scriptwriter molds the pieces of reality, content into perceptions, concepts and ideas.

But in situation comedies or plays, the perception of ideas and content differs: it is no longer necessary to identify the character of actors, sets - all is known from previous experience, and therefore, a fraction of perception time is needed to digest, identify - and pass out all this information from short memory as redundant information. What remains are only the situations, gags, jokes - and all these matters work mostly as stimulators of reaction, which in the case of television, for the viewer has a psychodramatic character. The majority of reactions are emotional ones and do not carry further development of the neural pathway (idea). But, in the long-range, a certain broad neural pathway (a "thin" one) is established, and occasionally may influence the behaviour of the viewer.

If the stereotype persists for a long time, or is transferable from one television programme to another (actor, story), then we are talking about an archetype. An archetype carries even less of a possibility to develop the new idea, neural pathway, because most of the variants and situations are already predictable. The informational impact has, more and more, an emotional character (fans or factor, stars).

Both stereotype and archetype require a certain minimal speed of action, dialogue, jokes, gags. This speed is much higher than that of any other television programme, and in feedback, educates the television viewer to quickly skim the perception of factual informationl parts (television news).

III. HIERARCHY OF VALUES FOR TELEVISION AUDIENCES

The preferences for programme selection based on the content of programmes has a lot to do with the broader aspects of "values" and "hierarchy" of them for each individual viewer, as well as for group interaction based on individual values.

What is a "value" is biocybernetic terms?

When we label the "idea" and "content" as temporal neural pathway, then the "value" becomes the environment, surrounding of the temporal neural pathway. I am referring here not to the amorphous environment of many "touched" neuron circuits by the neural pathway, but to the "resistance centres or regions" (p. 17). Both the negative and positive nature of this effect function in the brain cortex as "valves" or "gates" on which the stability, build-up or decay of neural pathway depends. Some resistance centres in the brain are so strong that they permit only fragments of pathways, partial, or highly distorted "ideas" to pass. The "valve" and "gate" itself does not function automatically or separately from the sensoric input. There is a large scale of feedback going on permanently between each new sensoric input and the existing neural pathways. Therefore, "values" are constantly, but slowly changing. It may happen that several neural pathways ("ideas") rise and decay within the same, unchanged "gate" or "valve". Values are by-products of ideas and content, but, paradoxically, may live longer in the brain cortex than the idea itself.

In psychophysiological terms, we may distinguish four areas in which the "gates" - value judgments work:

1. personal (psychological, psychodramatic, poetic) area;
2. pragmatic (economico-hygienic) area;
3. societal (national, racial) area;
4. environmental (scientific, informational) area.

In different centuries, in different societies, each area may be of a different size and preference. The hierarchy of preferences in value judgments, as it is expressed here, represent the current state (or expression of changes in values) of values for the contemporary television audience. It must be pointed out, that such a hierarchy is not a stable one, but may be changed for given situations in real life very quickly. But for the perception of television programmes, with the quantitative, mental distance and substitution specifics of television ideas, the order of preference is this one.

What are those "value areas" and how do they protrude in the television viewer's behaviour by the selection of the viewed programmes?

1. Personal Area is one of the deep reasons for the fragmentation of the audience. The contemporary person on the North American continent is quickly turning inward. Therefore, ideas and events of the inner personal life begin to be more important that the surrounding environment. This is partially the result of information saturation, or information overload of the environment. But there may be deeper reasons cued to the current deterioration of certain cortical functions, or overdoses of stimulators, or shortage of mental or physical hygiene.
What kind of an impact does this process have on television programmes and viewers? It is by far not only the preference for psychological drama or events connected with mental stories within the programme.
The selection of programmes is foremost dependent on personal, rather than group, family choice. This choice is guided by a psychological state of mind, and within this framework, expectations or dreamed connections between the programme and the viewer become most important. Any preceeding information regarding the programme has imminent importance just before the choice. The stereotypes and archetypes of shows, actors, situations are another strong guide for selection. Finally, the expected stimulative power is the guide for viewing.

When the selection of the programme is made, the most important factor keeping the audience watching the programme is a psychodramatic one. "Drama", in this view, has the same importance in tension, as the possibility of co-playing with the show has. Here, several modes of "co-playing" can be involved:

- perceptual mode: The viewer follows the programme mostly by his sensors, eyes and ears, perceives the events and joy from watching the programme from the ability to "follow" the programme. (Sport shows are examples of this mode).

- combinatory mode: The viewer follows the semantic skeleton of the show (here, the sensoric input can be minimal) and the joy of watching is in the feedback of successfully made predictions of story turns, situation endings, etc. (Detective story programmes are primary examples of this mode).

- stress wave mode: (poetic mode) - The viewer follows the elements of the programme which create stress waves in his/her cortex, and the joy of watching is in the "trembling of the mind", similar to the reading of poetry.

2. Pragmatic Area of values encompasses the mental relevance to the physical, material and economical life of the person. It is by far not only the matter of values connected with wealth, social status, working and professional achievements. It starts with notions of values, connected to the whole lifestyle of a person, group he is living in, nation. It includes all values regarding numerous material produces of daily life, satisfaction and dissatisfaction with material processes and also values attached to the materialistic attitudes of the society (consumerism versus non-consumerism).

During the '50's, this area was a leading one in the preferencial hierarchy of the viewer. Somewhere during the '60's, it sank very low within the younger generation. In contemporary times, it ranks as the second highest reason for the choice constantly diminishing among the television audience. In this area, a very interesting value reversal may occur when the television programme uses (disuses) the formal, syntactic phenomena. Here is an example:

> In detective stories (Barnaby Jones, Hawaii Five-O, Charlie's Angels), the car ends a wild chase by a crash accident where the automobile is destroyed. In the first program, the chase contains five different shots, in the second, ten different shots, and in the third programme, the chase occupies a whole two minute episode with several variants of stunts.

What happens with the pragmatic values in the television viewer's mind? For the majority of viewers, the car represents a certain material value expressed in the amount of work necessary to earn the appropiate amount of money. Therefore, the story of car destruction may have a different value impact for a poor or rich man (a poor man will be more or highly involved in the programme psychodramtically). Secondly, the value of characters in the show (actors) may be reversed. In the first case (short chase), the character of the villain and the detective may be seen straightfowardly as "bad" and "good", without any reversal. In the last case, the villan may perform an unusual stunt which surprises and enchants the viewer, and therefore, the villain may become the viewer's hero. And all may be in a matter of several film shots, or several seconds of the same story, differently executed.

The reversal of values may also occur without any changes in the structure or story skeleton of the television programme, when we perform the same programme to the culturally different audience (the frigidaire may be a revolutionary symbol for those viewers who do not have the money to buy it).

3. Societal (national, racial) Area of values is one that is very much disputed today. But very little is known about the specifics, how national values are perceived, judged or impacted from television programmes on the viewer. At first, there were four very different groups of societal (national) values which have different origins and different occurences:

- historical, hereditary societal values
- ethnographic values
- ethnopolitical values
- ethnocultural values

This division of values is taken from the works of Schramm, Carpenter and Osgood.

A. Historical, hereditary societal values are very often described as "traditions", and are pertinent to the society's past. It is always present where the viewer feels (or expresses) an "identity" with certain time and events in the history of the group, nation, race ("Roots" programme).
There is an interesting fact: the historical distance has a different "envelope" of values. When the television programme deals with relatively new facts, traditions, the viewer has precise feedback to assess the level of identification with the ideas of the programme. When dealing with the instant past, only general characteristics of historical and hereditary values are identified by the viewer, and usually it takes a much longer time to formulate a final value judgment - if the formulation comes at all.
Another aspect quantifies the experience from television programmes: if the viewer can identify himself clearly with the very distant past, the quantum of years (centuries) has a profound impact on the satisfaction attitude (and on hereditary pride).
The fairy-tale aspect of the distant past (once upon a time ...) has a strong stress wave (emotional) enhancement of value judgments.
Humorous or juxtapositive events, ideas, may have an indirect impact on the enhancement of value judgments.

There is also a limit to the impact of historical, hereditary values: Any such idea or content, presented with a high accuracy or a number of precise historiographic details in television programmes, may lose the viewer's attention, and this can lead to very weak development of "resistance envelope" of ideas and in weak or no value judgments at all.

B. Ethnographical values are those connected in the viewer's mind with his

- own region, state, province;
- different (distant) state, province, place previously known to the viewer;
- unknown (strange, exotic) state, region, place.

There will be a very different value attachment and attitude of the viewer to the television programmes with an expression of ethnographical values.

- Ethnographical values of one's own country, state, province:

Television programmes of this sort have to deal with two different mechanisms in the viewer's mind:

- the association mechanism (you express the home region how the viewer imagines it in the television programme, in the very best existence or in compression, cumulation of beauty and other positive values).
- the juxtapositive mechanism (expression of home region in an unknown or unwanted perspective to create diverse or strong reaction of the viewer to the problems of the home region.

- Ethnographical values of distant places, known to the viewer:

In addition to both previous mechanisms (association, juxtapositive), there is a strong enhancement possible due to past memories of the viewer (for distant country in Europe from one's own trips, readings, films; for places in the U.S.A. from holiday trips), which have a stimulative characteristic and can be used from television programmes for various purposes (promotion, advertisement, public relations).

- Ethnographical values of unkown (exotic) places are the only television programmes that the viewer truly acknowledges as "ethnographic". Here the information fill-up is very much present, which in certain cases, may have an educative impact. Strangeness of regions, unfamiliarity with surrounding s ehance the "value identification" by the television viewer. Generally, the more unknown or exotic regions programmes are brought to the viewer in the long range, the more the notion of relativity, tolerance is developed in the viewer's mind. The more television programmes are perceived regarding one's own region, home, country in an associative manner, the more the notion of nationalism or chauvinism is developed in the viewer's mind.

There is a certain danger in the presentation of television programmes with generalized characteristics (ranging from Clark's Civilization to news of apartheid in South Africa) which develop the support of racial values in the viewer's mind.

C. Ethnopolitical values:

Here we are dealing not only with television programmes expressing facts, ideas and content regarding certain state, political entities, but generally regarding all programmes dealing with political aspects of life (for example, the majority of current affairs programmes). There are three kinds of programmes which influence viewer choices differently:

1. The informational ones: the viewer's values are measured by the degree of informational satisfaction. When news regarding a social issue is delivered to the viewer (only occasionally registered or memorized), the value judgment is attached not to the individual news item or political fact, but to the "knowledge of it" ("I know what is going on from television ...").

2. The participatory ones: the viewer's value is measured by the substituted presence of the viewer in the political process via television. Broadcasting the House of Common sessions, court proceedings is a typical example of the participatory need of the viewer.

3. The psychodramatic ones: the value is attached by the viewer to the possibility of following the process of political events and decisions. In this respect, the sequential nature of North American journalism is best suited to fulfill this aspect of the viewer's choice.

In addition to these three different ethnopolitical influence of the viewer's choice, there is an indirect impact of an ethnopolitical nature. Whenever facts, ideas, content of a political nature is presented on a television program, the viewer's social values are enhanced or distorted. In a mass society, the ordinary man in the street rarely meets the leading politicians indecision-making process. Through the broadcasting of political events, the viewer becomes not only politically oriented, but attachs value to the direct sensoric contact with leaders of nations or societal groups. Both subtle influences have, in the final stage, a psychotic effect on the viewer. The mass of viewers, however differentiated or fragmented, can be more easily manipulated via television than via traditional executive and legislative process - (President Carter's "Fireside Chats" are typical examples of acknowledging the immense political power of television on U.S. inhabitants), first as form, but later, "content" aspect prevailed over "medium" novelty.

D. Ethnocultural values:

This is the least defined group of values, defined or identified by the viewer. In narrower terms, it encompasses the values corresponding to the "arts" generally, but from time to time, the "culture" involves values and questions pertinent to leisure activities, societal values, geographical or ethnographical features with a high emotional impact. It is interesting that in tribal situations, the "culture" has a more precise determination, function or spokesman, than the highly developed industrial societies. Diversification of lifestyles, activities and artforms contribute to this fact.

Ethnocultural values seldom act separately in the viewer's mind from the origin of the content. Therefore, we may see them as "embalages" of the other three major groups of values. But by the stress wave mechanism of functions (emotional impact), they can be immensely powerful.

There is another aspect in the temporal asis: with the means of ethnocultural value, any other value system or hierarchy can be easily changed or influenced. Therefore, such value impacts may be seen in television porgrammes as motivator, teaser, when another, more structured value system follows in the viewer's mind.

The impact of ethnocultural values is somehow limited: if we overfill the television programme with values of artistic or emotional impact and origin, the core validity of information may easily decrease. From the experimental research we know that approximately 10 - 15% of the overall values extracted by the viewer from the array of television programmes may be of this (ethnocultural) nature.

There is an interesting element in the age structure of viewers and the impact of ethnocultural ideas and values: two age groups are influenced profoundly: adolescents and the elderly. Adolescent audiences are (for cultural values) hypersensitive. Elderly audiences may attach high sentimental importance to the ethnocultural values.

Of course, the ethnocultural values can be divided similarly as ethnographical values into the following groups:

- values of domestic origin
- values of another known culture
- values of an unknown culture

Similar associative, juxtapositive and stimulative aspects apply in this group (as on page 27).

I would only like to stress the group of values of distant, less known culture (not in relation to the number of kilmeters, but in relation to the mental distance between cultures).

Although we may transmit the television programme easily across enormous distances, the cross-cultural understanding may find the highest barriers (and also the most vivid explanation and understanding)in ethnocultural values.

There is the immensely important fact of universal examples of culture, especially in the field of the arts (dance, singing, physical artifacts), which can profoundly enrich the understanding of all other groups of values. By the use of artifacts, we may achieve incredible "shortcuts" between the completely independent symbolism of two distant cultures. But there is always the present danger of semantic misinterpretation, or logical mishaps. Such failures cause less damage to the viewer's mind, the more they are detached from modelling the daily activities by the viewer. We must always be aware that modelling activity will occur more often in lower, less developed cultures, and information (values) skimming will occur in more literate, logical cultures.

(Example: Television programmes about Eskimos on the air in Montreal suburbs are less likely to involve modelling of Eskimo lifestyles. South Canadian advertisements of the credit-card system, performed on the example of art or culture of any kind, may provoke a high modelling desire in the James Bay area.

4. Environmental/ecological, scientific, information/values:

This is the youngest group of values in the viewer's mind, which came into more serious consideration within the last decase, along with ecological concerns of pollution, protection of environment and management of it. It is a curious group of values which, on one side, have the most universal concerns applied to precise locations (clean air, water, settlement, wildlife protection, population gwoth). On the other side, nearly every aspect of value hierarrchy protrudes in the viewer's mind, and we can label it as systematic, scientific concerns with many things.

The ecological concern was mostly vivid during the '60's, and is slowly fading away with the change of economic conditions of lifestyles.

The "scientific mind" is slowly gaining importance in the viewer's hierarchy of values, fuelled on one side by the supportive environment (news about the technological and scientific advancements), and on the other side, with fictional television programmes (science-fiction films and television programmes, rising in popularity in past years), stimulated partly by great advances of science (space research, genetics, nuclear sciences), partly by the detailed scientific environment of the viewer (telephone, car, electronic calculator, computer terminals in public places ...).

This "scientific mind" is not only the "content", semantic element in the neural pathways system of the viewer's brain. It contains a high level of specific logic (logics of scientific experiments, mathematics, mechanics, etc.) which influence not only the values of such a programme itself, but slowly starts to influence the overall thinking of the person. Such development of the human mind may be seen as problematic, but from the history of human civilizations, we know that each period in the past is characterized by certain styles of thinking (religious thinking in Medieval times, rhetorical thinking in Roman times, visual thinking in Egyptian culture, arithmetic thinking in Sumerian and early Arabic cultures). We might live in a century where scientific (and its popular application - "technologic") thinking is the prevailing style.

The hierarchy of television audience values is an invisible net of "surroundings", residuas of previous values, perception and storages. By the nature of this by-product, it brings the feeling of causality to the person. Because certain ideas, values are perceived or accepted by the audience of this or other regions more or less easily, there is an overall feeling of "mysterious" or "miraculous" values which can be taken by television programmes and become the core of high acceptance, rating.

There is no mystery in the value hierarchy in any social group. Only the connection between conditions of material being, lifestyle or ideas are not always visible.

By way of careful assessment of the environment, social group or culture, we may discover most of the cues for the hierarchy of television audience values. But one thing is extremely important: never, or with extreme difficulty, do we extract the audience data regarding content or values from post-surveys of aired programmes. The hierarchy of value assessment must preceed the airing or production of programmes, because this survey is a time-consuming process. Secondly, if it is aired there is very little choice to change the impact of the programme.

The best way will be the periodic assessment of audience values, repeated any time the broadcaster feels some significant change within the region. From several periodic assessments, the broadcaster may plot his own "psychographic map" of the region, dealing with the major hierarchies of values of people.

Some time ago, NAB completed the comprehensive assessment station handbook which deals, in addition to the quantitative data collection, with qualitative surveys pertinent to the viewer's attitudes, ideas, values. The data regarding the hierarchy of values has a certain importance to the broadcasted programmes as commodities.

How far and how fast does the hierarchy of values change in the groups of television audiences?

It was commonly known during the '50's that stereotypes of audiences were pretty much the same within the span of six-to-eight years. The ratings and programming structures held its data with high validity for a decade. During the '60's, the first deviations occurred in a shorter time than a decade. In the '70's, we may speak of the change of audience hierarchy within the short span of four-to-five years.

Another paradox occurs: when national coverage of television in the U.S.A. and Canada was not completed, the uniformity of the television viewer's hierarchy of values was very high. When we reached high saturation with televised information majority of the population, the hierarchies of values became diversified. Minorities voice their own (sometimes contradictory) hierarchy of values and by the "magnifying glass" of televised ideas these hierarchies become the property of other viewer groups.

These changes are perceived by ordinary viewers as "drifts", "pendulum swings" (from left to right, from radical to conservative, from atheist to religious, etc.), and by this simple stereotype, help viewers to orient themselves in the immense world of televised values and forecast the future choice of values and lifestyles.

Television programmes generally speed up such changes in the hierarchy of values by the nature of the medium (television), and, therefore, many hierarchies may be associated with television as a medium or some of its aspects (actor, anchorman, show). For example, there is a definitive existing hierarchy of values colored by Cronkite, Watson, Roberston, LaPierre, and many others, or a hierarchy of values taken from the Moppets, the M.T.M. show, etc.

This fact is part of what may be labelled as the "television stained glass window of the world", where realities exist without physical properties, only as televised thoughts, ideas, values - like actors with translucent bodies, entering and leaving the mind of the viewer with an ease incomparable to anything in our world.

IV. INFLUENCE OF IDEAS ON TELEVISION PROGRAMMING

To what extent do ideas, content influence television forms, genres on programme scheduling or programme production? There are basically four major groups of influence:

1. Influence of programme types (or general media influence);
2. Influence of programme syntax;
3. Influence of programme scheduling;
4. Influence of information design withing the programme.

These influences can not be tracked easily on individual television programmes, but they become visible from the "upper view" of anyone who deals with decisions regarding scheduling or producing television programmes of many kinds. It is a whole art of generalistic thinking, which preceeds any programming decision in television networks. What some critics call "irresponsible decisions of programmer, network executive" can, in fact, be a very complicated logistic process without possible solution at all.

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1. Influence of idea on programme type:

Here I would like to deal with different situations, surrounding the idea, if implemented in different television programme types. In general, the same idea can be perceived and processed, stored differently in the human mind, if it appears in a different type of television programme. Under programme type, I understand "genres" like variety, current affairs, children's programming (which usually correspond to the departments in the network), but also more specific groups like popular scientific programme types, religious programmes, or more general programme types like talk shows, panels, game shows, dramas..

Why are progam types important to the transfer of ideas in television? there are two basic reasons:

1. stereotyped thinking of the viewer;
2. established structure of the programme type.

The viewer has certain expectations of the range of possible ideas as a result of stereotyped thinking, which may appear within the programme types. For example, within the type of variety or sitcom, the viewer does not expect everything, but a certain number of situations, gags, juxtapositions adherent to they type. If such a range is maintained, the viewer labels the programme as "good", "real comedy ..."; if the ideas exceed the expected range, reports regarding the programme may sound "strange", "bad", "this is not comedy at all ...".

Is there any list of ideas adherent to programme types, or a possible measure of ideas impact on the viewer?

Every network is conducting some exploration in this area. It can range from idea, synopsis and script development where ideas are written in a text, and the text is read by several experts, to the sample of audience and effect of ideas is then extracted via reports, questionnaires, BSR responses. In many cases, the ideas are structured into trial pilot programmes. The reason for this is an irrelevance of the written text to the script and to the final show. They script may be a very good combination of ideas, which may not be realized by actors, directors, or other artists. On the other hand, even an average script can be enhanced by excellent actors, découpage, switching or music. Pilot programmes usually reveal the potential of script execution with an adherence of ideas to a particular environment, network praxis, actor, set or location.

Lately, computerized biometric methods have been developed for idea assessments in our laboratories. The script, text is read by an individual person (expert) and simultaneously by a sample of the audience (10-25 persons). The multichannel biometric tracking is applied (combination of ERG, EOG, EEC, EKG, GSR and EMG - see Information Design, Malik, 1976) and the responses in graphs are fed against the programme idea structure plotted in the computer's (type PDP 11/45) memory. The result is a decision / selection graph, showing possible acceptance/rejection of ideas contained in the script (written text). So far, this method has worked well for short segments of texts with relatively slow spacing of individual ideas, or ideas not too complicately structured. A person's fatigue and cumulative impacts of many condensed ideas in the text (synopsis) bring a substantial amount of biases and noise in the results.

There is substantial research carried on in this area by the Annenberg School of Communication in Pennsylvania by G. Gerbner's research group. The project centers on "cultural indicators", which after the extraction and processing of data quantitatively, yields the range of ideas that a certain layer of society reacts to, and in the same way, similar data is extracted from television programmes and other media sources. Both groups of data are then interrelated.

In Europe, work in this area is carried out by H. Kellner in Mainz and Veikki Pietila in Helsinki. In Kellner's work, the impact of ideas is cumulated under more general headings (for example, socialization factors of the television programmes), in Pietila's work the ideas are seen more structurally (for example, measuring of intellectual comprehension of ideas group).

Certain general characteristics can be seen in connection with ideas toward the programme types or genres:

A. Informational programmes (current affairs, news):

This programme type allows a very broad range of ideas to be presented. Most ideas must be attached to very specific content, with a high amount of factual parts. These factual parts can be in the programme itself (library film about the crash of a plane in the news), or in the mind of the viewer (rise in the price of meat, Prime Minister's speech on an important issue, a strike of factory workers).

Whenever the idea lacks specific content, or demands a high abstraction from the viewer, the programme type usually fails to deliver the ideas to the audience.

If specific content can be in any way associated with stress wave information impact (emotions), the ideas can be delivered faster, with stronger impact. (For example, the most violent news about catastrophies, wars, collisons where human lives are involved have such characteristics; hence, the newsman's slogan: "If it is not bad news, it is no news ..." There is a difference in television programmes where delivery of ideas is closely associated on the screen with origins, authors of ideas (interviews, talk shows, panels). Here ideas that always have a rhetoric colouring and non-verbal cues (motions, facial expressions and hand motions, work with great power. As a matter of fact, the longer cumulation of such non-verbal cues and rhetoric together make a "television personality" - now a highly desired effect of television newsmen, anchormen - and politicans (televised from the House of Commons) alike.

In the area of "heavy informational programming"(popular scientific shows, magazines,popular educational programming), there is a familiarity toward very specific content (as in the news or CA), but the ideas are very structured, with a high degree of abstraction. This situation requires a high degree of popularization, vulgarization which, in a truly semantic sense, is the involvement of necessary noise, redundancy (watering down the concepts), that the viewer will have time to comprehend the iniitial idea in the flow of the programme.

The easiest way to create noise is through the frame person (for example, Suzuki in The Nature of Things), but such situations may become boring stereotypes which, in the final impact, diminishes the impact of the ideas. We must keep in mind that specific ideas, presented on the screen require a specific person to explain them. (The "all knowing" person is more easily perceived by children than by adult viewers).

In the area of education (popular educational) programmes, the range of ideas seems to be initially unlimited (the notion of some networks "to replace school by television sets"), but in praxis, the range of ideas that work effectively as education on the screen, is pretty small. The reason for this is the absolute necessity of "controlled recall" by the viewers, which facilitates the core of learning. In most cases, this time is determined individually and, therefore, most television courses or lectures are ineffective.

One specific aspect in this genre is the accessibility of ideas aspect. It can be explained as an extension of intellectual borders of the viewer's interests. By the simple nature of daily activities, a person cannot think of many ideas. Television can bring many questions, concerns, ideas which otherwise would be completely ommited in the life of the person, to the active interest range of the viewer. Such "activitation" of interest can have a learning motivational effect on a person's ideas, or a stimulative power of existing (imagined, dreamed) ideas in the viewer's mind.

In this respect, much of the viewer's preference for travelogues, nature and wildlife programmes (National Georgraphic productions, Walt Disney productions), has its origin in this sense. On the other hand, programmes with societal (sociopolitical, sociocultural) ideas may not have a high impact on the viewer.

C. Arts programmes on the television screen:

Here we deal with two kinds of programmes:

- televised art performances (theatre, ballet, music)
- television arts

In the case of televised art, the ideas and its structure delivery depend solely on the original artwork, performers, ensembles. Television is (or should be) the invisible carrier of ideas. Many original ideas (of play, of theatre set, of musical performance) may not be possible to transmit via television. Also, socio-psychological effects of a direct performance are lost.

Somewhere between the televised art and television art lies television drama. Here, we face theatre on a small film screen. The content of the play, structure of ideas becomes "heavier" in television then on the stage. In the theatre, the viewer accepts apriori the limitation of the stage and the necessity to perform in a stylized way. In television, the feeling of reality location complicates the stylized way of theatrical expression. Therefore, it is more difficult to transfer ideas via television dramas than by the convention theatre setting.

Television art is slowly becoming the reality. A few years ago, we were witnessing only a few technological experiments with quantizers, computer graphics, chroma keys. Now in several countries (Sweden, Germany, France, U.S.A., Japan), these experiments are very organically included into regular commercial shows, and with a great impact. The formal phenomena,inherent to the television screen,enhance the delivery of ideas, free the imagination of viewers and bring notions of abstract phantasies in the mind of the sophisticated viewer (it may not yet influence the ratings of shows). Television poetry makes it a very catching way into the mind of the viewers.

D. Sport shows:

Here we deal with specific sensor-motoric stimulator plays. For the contemporary viewer, sport shows are (beside the "fan" complex) the greatest mental sensoric exercisers. To watch hockey or soccer games on the screen is much more exiting than to be in the arena (excluding the psychotic aspect of the fans' cries).Eyes are extended by the television cameras, situations are analyzed by replays, the best viewing conditions are selected by the switcher without any effort of the viewer. This is the most ideal situation anyone can imagine in the history of non-participatory sport! So, no wonder, sport programmes are so popular!

But when we judge the "ideas delivery", such programmes stay low on the ladder of effectiveness. The psycho-sensoric game occupies so much of the television programme's time, that the actual "content" is secondary, or not present at all. Only during the intermissions, with interviews and

and other kinds of informational programming, are a certain number of ideas delivered.

But there is a semantic aspect to sport shows: during a long time of watching many games on the screen, the viewer formulates a certain attitude, containing very general, envelope ideas of "masculinity", "violence" - and may, in many cases, model his/her own behaviour.

E. Children's programmes:

A few developmeant theories should be mentioned here first. According to Malcolm, Paiget, Charvat and Gabrielson:

- a child of 18 months - 2 years of age is not able to perceive most concepts, ideas, and is not able to recognize them in a television programme;
- a child of 2 to 3-4 years of age is able to intercept a limited amount of "content", but very rarely attaches an "idea" to the given content. Therefore, adult shows watched by children of this age may convey a very different meaning to a child. Only external motoric aspects of behaviour are stored in the memory (visual violence is perceived and carefully stored as a possible defence mechanism!) Stress wave mechanism (emotions) start to develop.
- a child between 4-6 years of age begins to hungrily perceive all possible content from the programme, without too much preference and especially likes stimulative programmes with simple allegories (Sesame Street).
- a child between 5-9 years of age begins to think in combinatory terms, the content is combined into the ideas, but due to relatively small memory storages, certain ideas may have distorted meanings.
- a child between 9-11 years of age is fully developed in watching television programmes of any kind and perceives, stores, or understands even subtle hidden ideas in the content. But, due to the coming adolescent period, watching television begins to be irregular and the ideas may not be stored with a high permanency. The emotional impact is periodically strong or low.

Here is a very difficult question of parental guidance: Before parents even acknowledge that their small child watches the television screen, first perceptions from the screen influence the child. Also, accidental watching (in shops, on the street, at a friend's home) may have a deep impact on a child. The indirect influence of television (post-watching talk with parents, comments during the show, talking with friends and play stimulation by the show) is only rarely used by parents.

So the situation in children's programmes is full of confusion. What producers or performers have in mind is easily (more easily than in the case of adults) dismissed or distorted during the watching of the programme or in the post-programme stimulation period.
One area is not acknowledged by television networks at all: the programmes for mothers-to-be (in 7-9 months of pregnancy, when the child's brain begins to develop in the fetus). I do not mean the instructions on baby care, but the mental stimulation of the mother by television programmes.

F. Documentaries

It is easy to say that documentary television programmes have the same range of idea delivery as any ordinary informational programming. This is not so. There is one specific aspect of "reality", the almighty envelope enhancing any idea presented in a documentary type programme. The notion of "reality" is, at a similar level of values, called "truth". It is an old, assimilative concept of perceptual, active feedback to man's environment (Wwhatever I verify by seeing, touching, experiencing through - holds in value and judgment").
With the development of photography and real sound recording (cinematography, television), this measure is at its highest status. We are able to reproduce an exact (undistinguishable) copy of an original situation, which can be experienced in an identical manner.
Therefore, the viewer accepts apriori the ideas of a documentary programme as reality, with only a faint background knowledge, that this reality may be selected, distorted or biased by television cameramen, directors, switchers, commentators, But such biases are readily accepted by the viewer in lieu of the difficulties of selection, distance, time lapses.
The apriori acceptance in "sophisticated viewer countries" works subconsciously.
In tribal socities, the viewer cautiously explores even the smallest deviation from reality.

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2. Influence of programme syntax:

Here I refer to the inner structure of the television programme and its influence on ideas in general. How is an idea influenced if the programme is long, short, has several episodes, is interrupted by commercials or is of a serial nature?

Each idea needs a certain time of presentation and a time of perception, identification, processing, storage. These two times are not identical. As a matter of fact, if the television programme presents many ideas at a fast pace, the viewer has no time "to think", and some ideas may be dismissed from the viewer's mind before they disappear from the television screen. It is very important for any television artist, producer, script-writer to carefully fill the programme time with "core" material of idea characteristics.

Television artists know that any idea to be presented must be prepared, built up and presented in a condensed "domain", at a strategic point of the episode and "cooled off" before the next semantic build-up. But how far does the imagination and intuition of an artist match the viewer's mental mechanism?

From biometric studies we know that idea formulation in the brain is a much, much slower process than a simple identification, perception or content. It often requires a time of several minutes. Therefore, a realistic possibility of a thirty minute programme is a presentation of, at the most, 7-9 ideas. Anything more than the basic ideomatic importance, has no change of being held by the long-term memory. In a one-hour programme, the number of ideas is relatively small, not reaching the point of 12-15, and are best perceived and stored with a high comprehension of 3-4 ideas. The amount of "content" may be much higher, ranging between 20-40 units for a one hour programme. Then the viewer will report it as a "rich programme", but may not be sure about the "meaning" of many episodes.

The single idea programmes (single value) are also difficult for viewers. It requires a great artistry of the actors, rich and unrepetitive variants of content and situations to convey the structure of the idea to the viewer. Stylization in this sense is a short-cut, a welcomed one by sophisticated viewers (television opera, ballet).

The segmentation of television programmes in episodes has a very beneficial impact on the viewer. When each episode ends and a new one begins, there is time when the viewer can perceptually rest, or systemize the content, or think.

Advertisements have the same beneficial value. It is not only refreshing from the viewing stereotype (if it is positioned at a good point in the programme and does not dissect an unfinished episode - with the exception of detective stories where such a break serves as a bridge to another higher tension build-up, which otherwise would be impossible for the exhausted, tensioned viewer), but (if not watched by the viewer), gives a rare opportunity to close one's eyes, do other activities and cumulate the previous viewing experience.

There is another important time which *succeeds* the television programme. In the few minutes *after watching* television, the viewer summarizes the programme, extracts basic ideas for long-term storage, interacts with one's own experience on a highly generalized level.

The impact of the *television serial* on idea delivery has a *cumulative stereotype effect*. In fact, the television serial can be shorter than the opening episode(overture), can jump right in the center of the action (as in a sitcom), and the opening part can swiftly "tune-in" the viewer by a previously known melody, credits, camera shots or graphics (All in the Family, M.T.M. shows).

3. *Influence of programme scheduling*:

Here I do not want to deal with the guidelines for scheduling of "ideas", but with a more substantial question: Does daytime television watching substantially influence ideas that the television viewer receives from the programme? Will the programme be perceived differently if watched early in the afternoon or late in the evening?

Most quantitative studies refer to the habits of an audience to watch or not to watch television programmes at a certain hour. Only two or three experiments were conducted in past years (Finland, Japan, Austria) with alternative scheduling of the same programme and comparative studies of the semantic impact of the programme on the audience. The results of the studies show no *significant difference* in the comprehension of the content of programmes.

During our biometric studies in the past years, we perceived certain changes in semantic comprehension during the daytime of a person, or in connection with certain activities.

1. The morning time usually shows a high comprehension possibility even more structured content and ideas. This is not the "early morning time of 6-7:00 a.m." (when some stations schedule "University of the Air" programmes), but the period of two-three hours after waking.

2. There is a low peak period to the extent of four-five hours after waking time, usually followed by fatigue or hunger. At the beginning of this low period, some people show symptoms of hypersensitivity.

3. There is a relatively average period of six-nine hours after waking, followed by a relatively short low, immediately afterwards.

4. If a change of day activities occurs (end of working day, shifts), there is a very refreshing period of one-three hours'duration.

5. There is a relatively high activity period which slowly lowers until twelve-fourteen hours ater waking in the morning.

The general perception of content is not significantly different during the high and low periods of a person's day. But the inclination of the process or generation of ideas is somehow limited to only several hours per day. One such period is during the morning hours (two-four hours after waking), and during the evening hours (ten-twelve hours after waking). The second period corresponds roughly with the "prime time" notion.

In both "semantically active" periods, a person is likely to process and store more important ideas, than during the rest of the day - from televison programmes. A few specifics follow:

- stimulators of any kind can be perceived during the daytime (sport shows, variety, game shows), and occasionally serve as "refreshers" between the programmes that are heavily informational;
- informational programming should not be scheduled late in the morning or in early afternoon lows;
- children have a much faster combination of peak and low periods, ending the day with more extended lows; (Watching television during the evening may be detrimental to smaller children due to violent semantic recalls (violent dreams). The "evening hour" for a child of five-six years of age begins between ten-eleven hours after waking in the morning.
- the more "content" episodes a programme contains, the more processing by the viewer is necessary and the more fatigue will immediately follow.

It should be noted that ten years ago, viewers continuously watched the same television station fluently for three-five hours. Today, viewers rarely watch two or more programmes on the same station. Channel flipping occurs irregularly, but more than five-six times during the evening, while the viewer stays "by trial" on another channel for several minutes.

4. Influence of information design within the programme:

Here I would like to briefly mention the aspect we encounter with the sophisticated television viewer: the semantic notion of information design, which may be popularly expressed as "station orientation", "programme profile", or simply the characteristics of a group of ideas, television diet, served to the viewer. The notion itself is seldomly expressed by the viewer, only faintly felt - but it was an issue of the current CRTC investigations into the orientation of certain television stations, or the CBC French network.

Such factors exist, and it is simply editorial matter in the highest sense, discussed daily in meetings of programming executives. Each network, each television station, slowly builds its own style, its own "personality of ideas" which is presented to the viewer. It is a collective mind of creative people, living and working in one corporation or company, They interact, consciously or subconsciously within the environment, between themselves, they see each other's product, and interact in their own new shows.

It would be foolish to think that such a process is invisible in the programmes of station networks. So far, this is a natural situation in any industrial enterprise, and many private businesses are very proud of it. So why should the CRTC not take notice of it?

What is extremely damaging is the journalistic vulgarization of such previous talent potential, when the question is simplified to a matter of biases or distortions. It is very difficult, or impossible, to censor or legislate ideas; it is much simpler to censor content. This applies to any idea: political, religious, pornographic, alike. So the real answer to this timely question lies within the artist himself, his responsibility, awareness, and, if you wish to say it - self-censorship.

Information design at its highest level within the television networks is an untouchable problem: it involves the soul of the creative employee, something which is usually not paid by salary. Even a "code of ethics" is not the correct expression for the adhurence, the enthusiasm, the creativity, and the deep sense of responsibility of an artist - all of which is invisible to the television viewer.

(For more on basic notions of Information Design in Television, see: Dr. Malik: Dessins de l'Information, Radio Canada 1976).

V. TELEVISION PROGRAMME IDEAS INTERCEPTION, MEASURMENT, IMPACT

Here, I would like to deal in survey with various methods of content analysis, data regarding ideas, way to intercept them in the earliest stage of production or measure the idiomatic changes.

A. In the first place, we deal with the semantic aspect of programmes, therefore not the individual information bits, pieces or factualities - but their meaning should be examined and interrelated with the behavioural attitudes of viewers. The semantic aspect should be treated as a higher category than "content", because much content may have a similar "meaning".

There are three basic approaches to the semantic analysis of ideas in television programmes:

1. Attitudinal scales (Osgood positive-negative attitude toward idea)
2. Comparative analysis (comparing ideas between themselves within the programme with general ideas)
3. Content analysis (comparing ideas with different contents)

Each of these approaches has its advantages and biases.

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1. Attitudinal scales:

The basic measure in this sense is attitude of the viewer toward the idea or concept. The slogan "like-dislike" is characteristic for the most simple binary response. More complicated scales use several steps of positive and negative attitudes (Osgood scales). For example:

nationalistic 6 - 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1 - 0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5- 6 cosmopolitan

The quantification of attidues gives (in return) the strength, level and adherence of the viewer toward a certain idea. Up to today, there is no better way of attitude measure - even if we use the most sophisticated battery of questions or arithmetic (logaritmis) measure of response. The major bias of attitudinal scales is its indirectness of idea measures. Actually, we do not measure the semantic aspect of television programmes, but the evoked relationship of the viewer with this programme. There is no assurance that the viewer must form the attitude toward the programme, and in biocybernetic terms, this does not usually happen within the short time range of the programme. Only by (sometimes very remote) retrievals, can the attitude be formed.

From biocybernetic neuroanatomy, we know that the enhancement of information retrieval from the cortex substantially influence the mechanism of the temporal neural pathways. This may result in the joint search or mixing of unrelated pathway signals, and the final responses in the questionnaire are very far from the original pathway in the viewer's brain.

Asking a direct, binary response is the hardest push, enhancement on the viewer. The inability to think in the full extent of the idea, shortage of time for the response, inability add one's own response to the standardized form of inquiry - are all insurmountable obstacles - which the viewer solves finally with a tic-tac-toe response, without substantially thinking about the content of the questions.

2. Comparative analysis

Here we deal more with the "soft" extraction data techniques, where several comparisons of ideas or content can be used for the response. (Basic questions like: "Do you like this actor as much as the other one...?"; "Which programming among these four do you like the best ...?"; Please number the preference among these ten programmes...").

The advantage of this analysis is the involvement of the viewer in an active thinking process where different pieces of content, messages are to be retrieved before final decisions are made. The disadvantage is in the limited number of choices, and in the diversification of the viewer's interest from the main idea measure.

3. Content analysis

Here we deal with the exploration of the viewer's comments regarding the actual realities of the programme and the extracted recall usually matches the skeleton of the programme. The measure of ideas is in close connection with the concept of "content validity" (questions or measures like: "Does this episode seem to you to be true, false, distorted, enhanced ...?"; "Is the actor, location, scene,real or re-enacted...?"). The content data extracted can deal with "real content" or "symbolic content" (imagine the .... actor in this ... situation). By the imaginatory replay of variants, we are able to extract the viewer's position to the idea, without direct questions on it. Within the content and analysis range, there are several very delicate questions regarding the "validity of data, concepts, methods" which relate to the meaning of the "objective truth".

K. Krippendorf distinguishes several aspects of validity (semantic, sampling, process related, pragmatic, predictive and construct validities). From these, the most important is the semantic concept of validity for the measure of ideas within the television programme. Semantic distinctions of content are actually measures of ideas in the programme, indirect and very soft ones, if extracted by the appropriate psychometric method.

But here is the first danger of content analysis: the classification of content of television programmes. This process is usually narrowed down to linguistic terms, very inappropriate for the actual means of television programme ideas. It is interesting that many ideas contained in television programmes, and actually creating temporal neural pathways in the human brain, are very difficult to code by words, or sentences of words. Then, even if the ideas are coded in words, they must very often be reprocessed in the viewer's brain from spacial and temporal-spacial concepts to the language terms - as many ideas from television programmes that the viewer does not need to code by verbal symbols, for future retrievals.

Secondly, the "analytic mapping" of the content analysis for television programmes must be multi-layered (some elements of visual, sound, music, spatial, sequential characters) and inter-spaced (the different ideomatic elements are spaced in precise relationships of time and succession by editing schemes of the programme). Equivalence of each part may be impossible to achieve, and still the viewer may possess a pretty stabilized neural pathway for the television programme content. Lexical identification of ideas and content merely cloud the content analysis more, rather than explain the measure of ideas by an exploration of questions. M. Fleury in the structuralization of iconic images touches some problems of meaningfullness (degree of significance) of visual symbols,from where it is evident, that validity concepts in content analysis may not be applicable for the idea expressed exclusively in visual terms.

Finally, the content analysis is heavily biased by the previously existing "content of the mind" of the television viewer. It is impossible to separate the neural pathway created by the television programme from the existing neural pathways in the brain's cortex, whenever the crossing has an overlapping nature. Even by distant crossing in the cortex (without activity of Purkinje cells), there is a possibility of interference (Pribram).

Some authors of content analysis (Miller, Stone, Janis) favour the term "messages". From the point of biocybernetic terms, the message is a form of content with high level of idiomatic symptoms, of which the viewer refers to without difficulty as "content containing ideas".

Actually from the information design field, we know that certain camera shots, words, gestures are of key importance for the whole scene, and we call these moments "domains" to which several other elements are of a preparatory or cooling-off nature. In linguistics, the "key word" notion can be related.

So far, there is nothing wrong in investigating such "domains" within the television programme, and many scriptwriters or directors scout for suitable domains when compiling a script or découpages. What can be very wrong is the message recall, done as a result of the content analysis. Very biased or distorted versions can be extracted by recalling or reproducing ideas in verbal forms through the viewer's responses. At first, the structure of the idea may not consciously be perceived by the viewer, or may not be recalled at all. Secondly, the structural aspects of the idea may not have been followed (the"strengths and lows" of ideas). Finally, in order to formulate the recall, the viewer may add his own words and additions, which have nothing at all to do with the television programme.

B. In the second place, there is a strong temporal characteristic. I refer to idea interceptions. This is the first degree of semantic identification which occurs not only with the viewer, but also at any stage of television programme development and production.

The process begins very early at the programme development level. The network executives, programmers or creators must have an "idea" of the programme, which can use all three elements of the semantics (attitude, comparison, content indication). At this state, the content of the programme itself matters less than the semantic skeleton, which usually contains not only the ideas of the programme itself, but also ideas regarding the programme impact on the viewer. It is a classic example of the whole information chain (source-transmission-receiver) considered together. Unfortunately, this coherence is very soon lost within the route of the production process, when the idea is given for the development of the script. There is an important stage missing in the television programme development: information design of content of the television programme.

I refer here, not only to the structuring of the idea before the script is developed, but also the analysis, testing and pilots with the skeleton of the programme. The methodology may range from the "sounding of the programme idea" in the most primitive terms among network executives, friends and families, to the sophisticated synopsis testing with a multichannel biometric set-up combined with various telemetric systems (Infratam Telectronic). Most of the ideas of the programme should be somehow notated in the full script. But a linguistic analysis of the script may reveal only a small part of the ideamatic structure of the television programme. In general, it is agreed that the script may (or must) contain approximately 30-40% of the ideas expressed in the final production. The executional characteristic (acting, directing, sound portion of the programme) may contain another 30% of the ideas and, the final editing adds 10-15% of the ideas of the programme. There is another whole story regarding ideas, which are added to the programme by the viewer, advertisements, scheduling programme between a surrounded television diet of one's one station or another channel.

The spacing of ideas within the time of the television programme is another temporal matter. I am not referring here to the perceptual characteristics of idea interceptions, but to the notion of "semantic spaces" within the television programme. This is an invisible structure of idea, which "are to be there" by the nature of television, by the genre of the programme, by the grammar of audio-visual messages.

This notion is very much connected to the viewer's general attitude, the basic core of the recall, that one specific programme or another is good or bad. So it is not the idea itself, but its inclusion within the framework, the perceptual milieu of the viewer, which lies behind the many quantitative respones from television programme ratings. If particular ideas are accepted or rejected by the viewer, the usual primitive recall of such programmes are characterized by words, such as - "I like particularly .... idea",or "I dislike it".

The spacing of ideas may not be connected at all with any logical perception. Only the inner mechanism of the viewer's mind (the establishment and maintenance of neural pathways) is responsible for the semantic spaces in the programme. But the artist can substantially influence such a process by simply inserting certain amounts of non-content fillers, or restricting the domains on certain times, or playing with various content in a juxtaposition manner.

There are several useful methodologies or tools for idea interception, measurement, and evaluation:

- analytical constructs are imagined or recalled skeletons of ideas, presented to the decision-makers (programmers) or a sample of the audience for the expression of attitudes or inclinations. They are most useful during the initial testing of a programme concept, general programme ideas.
- association models: the idea of the programme is given to the sample of the audience for recall on possible variants or associations with the original idea. The associations may indicate the extent of the impact of the idea on the viewer. Association models are usable during the production process for the enhancement of creativity among the members of the production team.
- discourse models: the idea of the programme is extrapolated with one or more different ideas and usually with the tool of dialectic discussion, enhancing, defending or offending, the original idea, the members of creative teams may disclose strong and weak elements within it.
- multivariate classification: the idea of the programme is inserted in different surroundings, societal environments, different structures (beginning or ending of stories), and the variants are classified on the test sample of the audience from their changing attitudes toward the variants.

Within the idea of the programme, there are two approaches of structurealistic nature, each exploring the sub-structures within the given idea differently:

- componential analysis: content components of ideas are related to the skeleton or original synopsis. Such an analysis is performed very often by the scriptwriter during the development of the script.
- contingency analysis: the idea structures are examined from the point of the relationship of the quantitative components (how many actors are in the scene, how big the location is, how many gags are in the episode, etc.), in order to give the show the necessary semantic balance

Finally, there are useful techniques for the summarization of data from semantic analysis:

- inferential and differential techniques: both techniques use mathematical analysis of content elements, counting or evaluating the degree of attitudes, arithmetic or logarithmic relationships of the content parts.
- automatic content processing: this methodology refers to the application of linguistic structuralism to the skeleton of the television programme, and to the computerized processing of quantitative data from the content (in a multi-variable manner, not only in the script content, but in the directorial script or in the final programme alike).

Finally, I would like to warn against the precise quantification of the meaning of ideas and content of television programmes. A certain degree of imperfection, confusion or meaningless parts of the programme, may significantly enhance the stress waves (emotional effect) of the programme's impact on the viewer.

A television programme, even in its most factual form, is an artwork. As such, it conveys independently of the ideas or content, the notion of beauty, poetry. If, in order to achieve the highest idiomatic impact of the television programme, we forget the artistry of it, the original impact of the ideas may be lost or distorted in the viewer's mind alike. The "beauty" rarely conveys the "ideas", but may serve as an important enhancement mechanism by the acceptance of ideas, where logical and pragmatic conditions are difficult to assert or acknowledge. In the logical and pragmatic world of the end of the 20th century, beauty becomes a rare means of understanding ideas, content and meanings.

VI. "BETTER"TELEVISION FOR "BETTER AUDIENCES"

After all the exploration of programme content, ideas, methodologies and measurement, the problem boils down to the question of how can we improve our current television programming from the mediocre, boring and sometimes vulgar level, to "television of excellence" - and, on the other hand, how can we raise the taste of audiences, which favor the rude sitcoms and thrillers to intellectual, informative programmes.

Somewhere inbetween lies the area of "television of a third kind", the unreachable hope of television producers and communication researchers alike.

The initiation for "thinking for action" does not lie within the television network, nor with the audience responses, ratings or researchers. It is by far, somewhere else.

A. Basic ideas regarding the world at the end of the 20th century

Before we apply any solutions to television programming, I will try to serve you, in short, the philosophical profile of our time with major questions and problems:

1. Paradox of Western Man: Individual in Mass Society

Our civilization is very much based on the philosophical context of Greek and Roman times. We praise highly human beings as independent individuals, with the freedom of thinking, speech, actions. We understand society in democratic terms. We try to be logical, tolerant, moral and spiritual in our lives.

But at the end of our century, we are faced with insolvable dilemnas: No longer can we be "independent individuals" living peaceful, individual lives in the countryside. We live in dense, populated cities where each of us depends on the actions of many other people. We no longer retain the ultimate freedom of speech, thinking, actions: our speech is modified by many behavioural aspects and prejudices, our thinking is influenced and bombarded by thousands of pieces of information daily, and we carefully steer our actions through a daily jungle of restrictions, organizations,institutions and negotiations. Our political democracy is highly deformed in time and space. We vote the representative into Parliament in the "Jeffersonian" mode, but the present government works in business terms of the electronic age and we are faced with a government in electronic speed (the television programmes from the House of Commons).

The logical actions of our lives are ridiculed by speed, interactions and combinations of humans beyond imagination. To be tolerant in a competitive society is synonymous with being a"loser". The morality is perceived as outmoded by coming generations, and the spiritual aspect of life is either not acknowledged or fashioned in "stylish" religious sect lives.

As a result, there is a deep internal unstability,dissatisfaction with ourselves with the "ideal of life". Two modes of escapism occur: the internal one, where the person turns inside, inward with explorations of gentle nuances of thinking, meditations, reflections of the "tremors of the mind", and the external ones, where the person perceptually experiences the "better" life of others or his own. This mode is characterized by the enjoyment of leisure time, enjoyment of materialistic amenities, enjoyment of social events.

Television serves both major needs of contemporary man (the inward programmes being mostly the psychodramas perceived by the viewer for his own associations with the content and ideas; the outward programmes sending the viewer to distant places, unreachable environments, class statuses, documentaristic or fictional situations. Television, in this sense, is the most sophisticated "magic carpet" in the contemporary world).

There is an increasing pressure during this century to make more room in the mind of contemporary people for humanistic ideas and content. The pressure may range from the proceedings of United Nations meetings to the pledges of regional church parishes, from local charitable organizations, to the warnings of the Club of Rome.

Humanistic ideas are being labelled mostly as those thoughts which support the historical and cultural notions of mankind as the highest and most sophisticated entity on the planet. But such thinking may contradict some positive and precious religious or political thoughts of faith, freedom, ecology. So with the implementation of humanism in television programmes, we may disturb the minds of local politicians, priests or environmentalists.

There is another aspect dominating this century. The democratic principle of majority. Within any social system, the consensus for action can be reached in the easiest way by the decision of the majority of the members of the system. This rule has held true for thousands of years in human society. But the majority rule is the standing reason for conflicts, escalating wars, competitions beyond reason, and in many cases, the cause of the final deterioration of the system. No other entity of the world is as cued to this role as humans.

Television has a remarkable power to enhance, exaggerate and distort, through time and space, the events which may lead to violent conflicts between humans. Here, I mean not the individual "value" principle, which is very much praised by communication psychologists, but the mass psychotic impact of televised wars, disasters, catastrophies, personal or national conflicts.

The notion that televised war "cools off" the masses of viewers, is only partly correct. With the subconscious rise of dissent with wars, generally, the viewers are much more sensitized to the "easy possibility of war anywhere", and this instability becomes a major negative factor of violent programmes (It does not matter if the war was a documentary or fictional programme.)

The "mass society" notion is uncomfortable for Western civilization, but the same notion is welcomed for most undeveloped nations or for nations with a collective power system (Communist states, Chinese, some African tribal states).

The second part of our century shows a rise in the number of states where collective power systems are combined with compelling majority rule. The original notion of "individual man", in the Western civilization sense, is often rejected.

If we cross such invisible borders of society systems with television programmes, even the most innocent parts of a programme (dress of actor, car, utilities in household) may provoke a violent socio-political response.

Probably the 21st century will see,even more, a rise of "mass society" collective power systems. It will be interesting for television programming to explore and examine the pros and cons of different systems from many points of view. Television programmes of a documentary or investigative nature (McLear, Fifth Estate) are, by far, not enough to cover such ideas. Many more internal approaches in this area are needed (explanation of societal and political systems for within, inside, not as seen by "strange" reporters, television anchormen.

2. Paradox of geosocietal spaces: Local, National and Cosmopolitan Thinking:

This is a "hot issue" in television programming everywhere, connected with nationalisms and regionalisms of many kinds. More than ever, the rights, borders and state matters are discussed on television screens all over the world.

In time, when more issues require a world view or decision (pollution, population, economy, food), more and more regions will choose political and cultural independence. The Quebec issue within Canada is only one of many such movements in the present world. In the past ten years, more than forty-one new nations have established their independence, and another sixty-two nations changed their structure, constitution,or borders.

Quebec separatism is nothing unusual in our time - it is a very natural process, occurring at the same time in many places on our planet.

We can observe fragmentation of societies of other kinds - certain regions or minorities of populations are reaching for partial or imaginative independence (thinking, pride, emotional rejections) is far more important than the factual one. Once this is satisfied, the movement cools down rapidly, or dies as an issue on television screens. (After a few years of independence, small states join back in economic or trade unions, or form political blocks without different political or ideological profiles).

The most persistent thinking begins to be a local one. The needs of a small community can be momentarily an unimportant one, but such an issue will persist for a long time. So there is a chance to appear repeatedly with such material on television screens. The national, cosmopolitan thinking may be of a unique, high momentarily importance(funeral of J.F. Kennedy, kidnapping of P. Laporte), but the issue dies very quickly on television screens. Time and space play smaller and smaller roles in television. It does not matter if the news comes from a very distant place or from a neighbouring city. The content of the news matters more.

3. Niveaux of Cultures and Histories:

The notion of culture is very uncertain in contemporary man's mind and encompasses everything from popular culture items to artistic and poetic expressions of a very different nature. We often label the culture differences as the only or very precious value. But when it comes to the definition of it in television programmes, our opinions vary greatly.

The niveaux of cultural information within the television programme is sometimes used as relevant to the "sophisticated" or "elitist" television programme. But when it comes to the popular culture (pop culture), (those programmes which are enjoyed by a large portion of the audience), it is far from the notion of "culture" itself, and is usually called "light entertainment".

The question of "historic niveau" is a more complicated one. At first, "everything in the past" is labelled as historic niveaux. But, within it, there are significant differences. The events of the immediate past (fifty to a hundred years ago) are very comfortable history for the television viewer, and are associated with the term "nostalgia". For television artists, it is one area of slight stylization, and comfort with ideas and philosophies. The distant past (history) is always highly stylized, with an obvious tolerance to the distant past, but the historical values and their interpretations are subjected to personal artistic expressions.

4. Economic aspects of life:

Here, I would like to account for the mental reflections of economies, not for the economic realities of life. Within the television programme, we often label this area as "lifestyles". The importance of it for the television viewer is one of association or alienation. Therefore, such ideas do not only serve the purposes of the plot, story, but mainly in the building of the viewer's long-range attitudes toward the programme. Most television sitcom ratings have their origins in this aspect of attitude. The detailed jokes and gags of the episodes only serve the immediate stimulation of viewers, and are not carried into the long-term memory. The "lifestyles" of A. Bunker, C. Burnett and M. Moore are bases for middle class stereotypes and archetypes.

In the most general terms, the economic aspects of life protrude significantly in this part of the century. The organization and material values aspects are expressed in economic terms. Multi-national economic organizations are the only bodies able to overcome the fragmentation of states and different political systems.

One interesting area in contemporary economy is the idea of a self-sufficient economic entity. I am referring here to the second report of the Club of Rome, where basic data of inhabitant numbers are related to the basic rules of self-sufficiency. Here, the trends of the past fifty years are of critical importance (1920 - module of seven-to-nine million inhabitants; 1940 - fifteen-to-eighteen million inhabitants; 1950 - forty-five million inhabitants; 1975 - eighty million inhabitants). These figures determine economic feasibility of many movements for independence and the establishment of separate entities, states (namely in African and Asia), very easily.

5. The clash of materialistic and idealistic thinking:

The 20th century will be probably known in the future for this philosophical aspect. It can be expressed as the difference between the mental and material spaces and values. Nowhere in the history of mankind have the fantastic possibilities of material life values been confronted with the idealistic thinking of priests, politicians and philosophers. Contemporary man feels the imbalance and noncorrespondence of spiritual life to the material well-being in contemporary time. The more the social and political systems of the state tend toward materialism, the more spiritually empty people feel. The more idealistically the leaders of the community think, the more the members of such communities suffer materially. The dialectics of thinking offer no feasible solution for such problems.

These are only the very basic ideomatic areas pertinent to the second half of the 20th century. The steering of authors, ideas and synopsis of plots of shows within these areas should be the primary task of the television programmer.

B. Basic mental stereotypes, archetypes and modems of television audiences:

Here I would like to talk about the existing stereotypes and archetypes of our audience, without attaching negative or positive values to them, as we must acknowledge them as "operators" of human minds:

1. The stereotype of "progress":

The past two hundred years of this continent have been underlined by a tremendous drive of inhabitants to stir the technological, economic, financial, national, regional "progress". To go faster, to manufacture better or more sophisticated products, to be in better financial situation, to have bigger cities, more inhabitants in the country ....
This is the deep in-built stereotype of most layers of our audience, especially the older generations. Only the younger generation is more open to the notions of "balanced growth" stabilized growth, etc. Our television programmes tend to favor the older concepts of "progressing".

2. The stereotype of "property":

Many times in our programmes we deal with the notion of ownership ... private, corporate, state ... of goods, of institutions, of commodities. The private ownership notion is somehow a sacred rule, and any deviation brings a feeling of the extreme left, if not a "communist ideology".

The stereotype of ownership is felt in our audience straightforward on the personal level: ownership of house, car, insurance ... the ownership of public properties, industries, banks, is left to speculation ... and is most cloudy at the level of state, international bodies.

For older generations, the notion of ownership is associated with the notion of social status. For younger generations, ownership (except most personal properties) means far less in the scale of human values.

Our television programmes cater very much to the established notions of "property".

3. The stereotype of "freedom":

Sometime, try to count how many "freedoms" we speak of in television programmes in a single day: freedom of speech, freedom of decision, freedom of religion, race, minorities, freedom of women, children, animals freedom of ideas, political and religious beliefs ....

All we mean are changes in the degree of freedom in any given case, as most of these freedoms are impossible dreams at an absolute level.

Very seldom do we mirror objectively both sides of pronounced freedom in television programmes. The positive, prosocial or pro-minority side is favored more than any disadvantage of free decision, free behaviour.

It is very important that, in the future, we face this question more objectively - as our planet becomes more and more crowded and less "free" behaviour is possible.

Also, it is important to show that "freedom" for some groups or members of society may mean more restrictions and disadvantages to others.

Television programmes have a remarkable power to discover many sides of pronounced freedom in an incredible fast speed of electronic information.

4. "Joy of life" stereotype:

This is a typical admiration of light pleasures of daily living. Basically, it is an escapist stereotype. It is easy to forget the unsolved problems of day and favor the minute pleasures of social conversations, eating, comfortable living, joking, partying. Light entertainment and variety programmes cater to this stereotype. The stimulative power of it is high. The long-range effect is deterrent.

5. "Home and family" stereotype:

This stereotype favors the basic notion of a social entity - the family. In the past, it was the "sacred theme" of films, television shows, treated with a high amount of emotion and sentiment. The present type of television programmes favor a more objective side of the stereotype (values and problems of family life), with the young generation very permissive to the variants of such an entity (communes).

5. "State and Religion" stereotype:

Traditional stereotypes of the early 20th century in communication media: from the '30's and '40's, treated with different attitudes of artists; in the '50's and '60's, shown from the most controversial points of view; now sometimes discarded as values in television programmes, but in current times, returning to the traditional point of view by a few artists.

6. "Ancestry-origin" stereotype:

A fairly large amount of the television audience has a strong emotional attachment to the group in question, connected with either their own origins, ancestry, or with the origins of an associated group, nation. Television programmes featuring the historical themes of their own group, nation, cater to this stereotype (Roots).

These are the main current stereotypes maintained in today's television audience. When it comes to the structuralistic notions, syntactic matter, we talk about the archetypes: Here are some main archetypes of television audiences:

1. "Small person"archetype:

The example of an ordinary citizen of medium, average intelligence, fighting the bureaucraties of the system, socio-psychological problems in his own family, winning or losing with innocent surprise. (Archie Bunker, Carter Country).

2. "Happy, poor person" archetype:

The example of a typical "loser", bum, hobo, winning life through happy circumstances, charity of others, natural humor, misleading coincidences. (Jeffersons, Rhoda).

3. "Super persons, superman" archetype:

Witty, intelligent, every-time-prepared detective, investigator, scientist, doctor, lawyer. Every-time-winning person of "good" character over the "bad" criminals. (Hawaii Five-0 , Barnaby Jones, Rockford Files).

Although these three archetypes can be seen as television "characters", I would like to point not only to particular actors, but mostly to the archetyped behaviour, expected actions or the chain of actions, which mold the factual archetype impact. Any time the archetyped character detours from the expectations, the impact of the audience is lower, and in the end, the character (actor) becomes only the empty outline of audience's expectations and tastes. This notion is known by every actor/character working in a television series, when the arsenal of an episode is stretched to the desired 26/52 format.

4. "Feminine power" archetype:

A young, beautiful girl can solve all life's problems easily - on the television screen - this is a long (film) pertained archetype of North American audiences (successfully exported to all other worlds). This archetype can combine with all three previous types, winning a large audience (Charlie's Angels).

In current years, this archetype has been successfully combined with television and other advertising campaigns, and may have a very persuasive impact on society.

5. "Happy childhood" archetype:

In this archetype, the notion of parent's responsibility and admiration of childhood is exploited. It is interesting that what constitutes an archetype for adult viewers, may be absolutely boring (no archetype) for children themselves.

6. "Love-hate" archetype:

This combination of socio-emotional attachment between people is not a specifically North American archetype (very pertinent in Oriental shows), but on the television screen pertains with the fast pacing of the show, with a syntactic impact of the plot. This archetype, enhanced on the television screen, somehow undermines the actual life values of both emotions.

7. "Life-death" archetype:

Another general archetype, "speeded up" by television films, are thrillers and most violent programmes. Simplifications of both values have a profoundly negative impact on viewers, especially on children. The fast and "painless" killing on screen is one of the most impactive acts of violence, modelled by children.

8. "Surprise" archetype:

This is one of the most general syntactic archetypes. Unexpected action, unexpected reaction of the actor, unexpected ending of an episode are sources of "surprise" on the television screen. In many cases, the outcome is the "weight" of a joke or gag.

9. "Miracle of ..." archetype:

Help at the last moment, reversal of catastrophic situations, the impossible solution to the problem - all these are welcomed in scriptwriters syntactic archetype tools. For the viewer's mind, such reversals are a source of psychodramatic relief, which supports the notion of satisfaction or enjoyment of the programme.

10. "Happy ending" archetype:

The expected, but tensionable delayed solutions of problems, stories, conflicts on screen fulfill the viewer's ultimate expectations. But in current years, this archetype is favored less than it was several decades ago, where generations of movie-goers were still before our television screen. Generally, the more complicated the plot, the more difficult it will be for the writer to finish the story with a happy ending.

Beside stereotypes and archetypes, there is the notion of modem in audience perceptual spectrum. It is a bridge between the established ideas in the viewer's mind, and the imaginary world of television characters, situations, actors, episodes. It is a very fast switch with which the viewer starts to accept easily all impossible, no-true situations, problems or characteristics which will be coming from the television screen. In basic terms, it is the stereotype or archetype of the television viewer himself. The "switched state of the mind" for television watching resembles other switches which occur during life's states of love, religion or psychosis.

Stereotypes, archetypes and modems are the basic building stones of an incredible impact on the viewer. With their help, ideas and content of television programmes on the North American continent are delivered to the viewer's mind faster and more easily. In fact, they are kind of very subtle combinations, called information matrixes (patterns).

C. Hopes for Television Programming in Canada and Quebec

After all this explanation, we live in a country named Canada, in a very special province named Quebec, and programme our television shows mainly from Montreal. So, here are some hopes for "better" television to "better" audiences:

1. The full geographical approach:

So far, the majority of our shows and news deal with a narrow strip of the Canadian and Quebec country, extending roughly four hundred miles north of the U.S. border. The proportion of news and programmed modules is 80% regarding the "banana belt" and 20% for ideas and content of the remaining part of Canada and Quebec (North), where geographically, the South comprises 20% and the North 80% of our geographical space. The main role of television programming is to reverse this disproportion. The news, dramas, documentaries regarding the Canadian and Quebec North should be substantially enhanced, the news and items regarding the southern portion of the country diminished.

2. The full historical approach:

So far, we have dealt with Quebec and Canada mostly in terms of the past two or three centuries. The history of the country begins, for us, with Cartier, Cabot and Champlain. The preceeding twelve centuries are nearly forgotten, or perceived as exotic ancestry. We deal in tremendous detail with small, minute actions, historical battles, names of kings, counts, merchants, in those two or three centuries - and forget the histories of fifty-two Native nations in our space for as long as our Greek-Roman civilizations. In this respect, all efforts to find one's one national identity, if scoped only on French-English questions, is incredibly narrow and non-historical. The main role of television programming should be to reveal the full historical panneau of Canada and Quebec in the past ten, twelve centuries. It means producing more shows about the distant past, rather than solely of European-Canadian ancestries.

3. The full philosophical approach:

In presenting ideas in television programmes, we are almost "chauvinistic" in retaining the position of Western philosophies. Any deviation is perceived either as exotic or subversive. I would like to remember many philosophies of Native nations, living on Canadian and Quebec soil with a remarkable attachment to environment, premieval, social and political conditions here.

What we may claim as the newest environmental discoveries, may be read from the legends of our Native ancestors. When we try to cope with the problems of modern mass society, some societal rules of high efficiency were in existence in this country five or seven centuries ago.
For television programme ideas, it should mean that Canada and Quebec are more than outgrowths of Europe, Greece and Rome - that some original philosophical discoveries took place in our land - and we do not need to reclaim them as our origins. Besides, there are and always will be a valid look into the minds of others.
Instead of dwelling on the fashionable Western philosophical approaches, our television programming should be more inclined to our own philosophies and to the philosophies of non-Western origins.

4. The full ethnographical approach:

Just as a Québecois does not want to be called a "Frenchman" and an inhabitant of Alberta a "Scotsman" or Irishman", we should realize the full ethnographical potential of being Quebecois or Canadienne. Neither the present polarizations between French and English, nor the federal policy of multi-culturalism is a feasible approach or solution to the problem. The bilingual polarization aim of the cultural-linguistic differences do not acknowedge the socio-economic realities of Canadian life. The multiculturalism policy enhances the look backward, into the past of ethnic entities regarding their old home countries or places of departure for Canada.

Nor is Canada the American "melting pot". The differences are are important for our inhabitants, than ethnographic similarities.

Therefore, television programming should enhance the factual ethnic web, from which the present Quebecois or Canadian is molded. It should mean in Quebecois, the example of the enhancement of the past (Montagnais, Cree, Iroquois, Métis) and from the present (Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, and Greek) for Canadians generally the same of all our long country.

Television programming should diminish the propagation and enhancement of cultures and ethnographies typically American (for example, cults of West westerns, cult of pioneers, cult of self-made-man, etc.)

5. The full cosmopolitan approach:

We do not deal objectively in our television programmes with the world. Looking at the quantity and quality of ideas, certain areas are enhanced (U.S.A.), other areas diminished in actual proportions of information (Asia). We do not deal with the actual importance of ideas. Our approach is very much "daily journalistic", accepting at par the ideas coming from current events.

Our television programming needs a basic strategic set of world values (similar in structure to "Mankind Goals"), with an outlook not into the 19th, but to the 21st century.

There is another important aspect of our television programming. The outward look of Quebec and Canada, the set of programmes, ideas, and news about us as presented to thw world. Scanning Canada and Quebec from outside, we look remarkably "strange" and "unexpected" to ourselves. Notions of wealth, harmony, excitment or economic successes do not correspond to our own feelings regarding Quebec and Canada.

It is time for television programming to look into this matter, correct is where possible, and learn about ourselves from the opinions of others.

EPILOG

Television content is the most intangible thing within the television network praxis. I have tried to pin down some concepts, ideas and notions regarding television content. But, basically, it will stay and will be realized as the daily work of the group of programming-decision people, with their decision, agreements and quarrels over the issues, themes and scripts. It should be finally identified from the aired programmes over a long period of time. But this will be a task for broadcast historicians.

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